

After Hart,  
whither the  
Democrats?

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# IN THESE TIMES

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# Who gets the foreclosed farmland?

By David Moberg

The threat of a new wave of concentration of land ownership has sparked calls for land reform in Central America. No, not in Honduras or El Salvador. Rather, in Iowa, Nebraska and Minnesota.

The farm crisis of the past six years has led to a swollen inventory of foreclosed farmlands now in the hands of public and private lenders. That inventory is expected to grow rapidly this year as the major federal government farm lender accelerates its foreclosures after a two-year, court-imposed moratorium. And the rate of farm liquidations has been rising over the past year as many hard-pressed farmers have reached the breaking point.

The big question is who will own all this land. Policies adopted in recent months suggest that most of it will be bought by the already big farmers (one-fifth) who were financially sheltered in recent years, with a big chunk

stock and equipment, making it impossible for him to pay his other debts. His insurance company mortgage-holder bought most of the land a year ago, and Sullivan thought he would be able to buy it back from them.

But recently Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), a leading farm lender mandated to serve smaller farmers who have difficulty getting conventional bank credit, bought the land. Now Sullivan worries that Farmers Home will sell it to somebody else. "If they sell it to us, we have to have the cash up front, every dollar," he said. "They won't give us an FmHA loan. The people who need [land] don't have a chance to buy it."

**Reason to worry:** Jerry Hansen, a farmer who works with the Center for Rural Affairs, a Nebraska small farm advocacy group, recently surveyed numerous recent sales in Nebraska and found a pattern of FmHA favoring buyers with cash, even local business people, over the kind of farmers FmHA is legally designed to serve. According to the center, Farmers Home in many states has reclassified much of its land inventory as either "surplus" or "unsuitable" for its program. These bureaucratic moves, which the center challenged in a lawsuit filed last week, permit the agency to sell the land to anyone without regard for its legislated mission.

The Farm Credit System (FCS), a private, cooperatively owned lender chartered by the federal government 50 years ago, is also selling off much of its land, often offering bargain interest rates. Its Federal Land Banks hold more than 40 percent of all farm real estate loans. But because of farm failures and the collapse of land prices, the FCS has been losing money by the wagonload—\$2.7 billion in 1985 and \$1.9 billion in 1986. The losses have led to a flight of stronger borrowers from FCS to commercial banks, increasing both the pressure on financially weaker farmers who remain with the Land Bank and the possibility of the system's failure. Recently the FCS asked Congress for a \$6 billion bailout.

But some FCS district offices in the Midwest—St. Paul, Omaha, Wichita and St. Louis—have begun to sell farmland aggressively. The St. Paul bank made a splash with its ads offering investors a chance to "buy North Dakota!" or "buy Minnesota!" at mortgage rates as low as 4.9 percent. The catch: buyers had to put 40 to 50 percent down in most cases.

**Large land inventories:** The Farm Credit System held 2.7 million acres worth about \$1.1 billion at the end of March; FmHA had 1.6 million acres, worth a little under \$1 billion. Mark Schultz, an organizer for the Land Stewardship Project, calculates that the top 12 landowning insurance companies now hold about three million acres of land worth around \$2.3 billion. *AgriFinance* magazine conservatively estimated last fall that commercial banks held 400,000 acres worth \$350 million.

Given the expected increase in voluntary and involuntary liquidations this year, Gene Severens of the Center for Rural Affairs estimates that 10 million acres, worth more than \$5 billion, will go into or through lenders' inventories this year. That is roughly equal to one-third of all the farmland in Iowa. But there is also much land "technically available for sale even though the 'for sale' sign has not been hung up," Severens said.

Until now lenders didn't want to sell: land prices were so low that they could recover little of the collateral the land supposedly represented, and selling land when land

prices were still falling could worsen land prices and further undermine their outstanding loans. But commercial banks, like the Federal Land Banks, feel pressures to get cash to cover losses. The FmHA "wants to sell because they don't want the headache of management [of the lands], and the present administration is not committed to the original public purpose of the agency," Severens said.

Contrary to reports of an end to the farm crisis, farmland prices in the Midwest continued to plummet last year (17 percent in Iowa, 14 percent in the Great Plains), down as much as two-thirds from the peak in 1981. Only government target price payments on record yields sustain the farm economy. In some cases, land prices are now low enough that farmers with lots of cash and low debt—roughly one-fifth of farms, a Department of Agriculture survey suggested—might be in a position to buy land.

The result is that a tremendous opportunity for land reform and strengthening moderate-sized family farms is being turned into a bargain-basement sale of farmlands to big farmers and investors, often with taxpayer subsidy.

"We are facing a unique period of history when some major directions will be shaped by who buys and ends up owning this land," Severens said. "The crucial public policy question is who will be in the position to buy the land when the land is affordable. Now there is no public policy that efficient, family-sized farms will have a chance to participate."

**Blue-chip borrowers:** The FCS and FmHA policies already favor cash-rich, blue-chip farmers and investors. The proposed bail-out of the Farm Credit System will make matters worse by establishing a government-guaranteed secondary market in farm mortgages, much as now exists for home mortgages. Banks that now avoid long-term farm real-estate loans on their own could package their farm loans and sell them to big investors. Establishing such a market "would lower interest rates for the blue-chip borrower, and they'll turn around and compete with the average workaday farmer" who might not meet stiff lending standards a secondary market would establish, Severens said. "We'll give advantage to precisely the people who don't need or deserve it."

The center proposes instead that the government purchase the FCS land inventory at current market value, then slowly resell, with appropriate financing, to previous operators and moderate-sized family farmers meeting FmHA standards. That would bail out FCS and, since it would set up a dual market in land, not depress land prices further. Strict conservation requirements could be imposed. It would preserve a more socially desirable, equally efficient distribution of land.

Legislation is now being considered in Congress to force the FmHA to write down loans to the market value of the farmland collateral if the farm showed a positive cash flow. This would preserve existing farmers and probably save FmHA money.

"Land is being concentrated and consolidated in a very rapid manner," said David Ostendorf, director of Prairie-fire Rural Action, the Iowa farm advocacy group. "If this country saw this data emerged in a Central American country controlled by socialists, they'd have the invasion forces ready. This is a whole process of Central Americanization of America."

The shift in land ownership also reflects a fundamental but little appreciated side of the recent farm crisis: the farmers being weeded out have not necessarily been less efficient, just financially weaker or more vulnerable.

Land reform has been a long and losing battle by American farmers, argued Cornell University rural sociologist Charles Geisler. The famous Homestead Act of 1862 designed to give free public land to the landless was quickly foiled. Then for several decades poor farmers were told they could climb "the agricultural ladder" from hired labor or tenancy to ownership. There was no empirical basis for the ladder, but as a myth it helped to defuse the left-wing agrarian revolt brewing in the '20s and '30s.

The farm crisis now has inadvertently led—and could further lead—to "an inoffensive way of nationalizing a very important resource," Geisler said. "An enlightened administration could turn this land into a utility and subject it to all the privileges and responsibilities of a utility." But with an unenlightened administration, the trend is to greater inequality.

## INSIDE STORY

also being acquired by outside investors, including insurance companies. Medium-sized family farmers, especially those just starting or trying to return to farming after financial disaster, are the likely losers.

Take the case of Bob Sullivan, an award-winning farmer from Dunlap, Iowa. Having helped his sons buy land to join him in farming, he was then hit by three years of low cattle prices. Then his local bank failed, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation took over. It insisted on immediate payment of debts, then seized his grain, live-

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By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

**F**OR NATO LEADERS BESIEGED BY THREATS OF disarmament, the trick is to find a way to say yes to Mikhail Gorbachov's insistent disarmament proposals and still keep on arming. The Reagan administration thinks it has found a solution by accepting the "zero option" to eliminate U.S. long-range Pershing 2 and cruise nuclear missiles from Europe, the better to surge ahead with other weapons systems.

For the European NATO nations, the trick is to use apparent U.S. gestures of withdrawal—such as getting rid of the Euromissiles—as an occasion to build up the forces of the European "pillar" of NATO. For political reasons, this has to be explained as filling up "gaps" in NATO defenses, where Warsaw Pact forces are supposedly superior. But Gorbachov's offers to scrap Soviet armaments are making it hard to find a stable "gap" to fill.

The problem became acute when Gorbachov offered to extend the "zero option" from the Euromissiles downward to the somewhat short 500-100 kilometer range category where the Soviet Union has a clear superiority—130 missiles by NATO count, compared to only 72 American-built Pershing 1A missiles on the NATO side. The 72 Pershing 1A missiles are in the hands of the Bundeswehr, the German armed forces, but with their nuclear warheads under U.S. control.

NATO leaders who were getting ready to fill that particular missile "gap" were aghast when Gorbachov offered to destroy the gap by scrapping the Soviet missiles. West German Defense Minister Manfred Wörner reportedly is lobbying hard in the NATO Nuclear Planning Group to replace the existing 72 Pershing 1A missiles with a total of 152 Pershing 1B's, a shortened version of the Pershing 2.

This is why Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government held back endorsement of the "double zero option." Kohl, Wörner and their fellow Christian Democrats want the Soviets to keep enough missiles in place for NATO to be able to build up to balance them. As this seems pretty ridiculous even by NATO standards, Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher and his Free Democratic Party balked. Genscher thought such quibbling would be impossible to justify either internationally or to domestic public opinion. But Wörner did not give up. The Bonn coalition was reportedly close to a split.

**Scrambling for position:** With the Reagan administration demanding an answer from the NATO allies, Kohl was scheduled to give his government's final position on the "double zero option" proposal in the course of a major Bundestag debate on May 7. Instead, he confused the issue with a half-hour "clarification" that put off a final policy decision until his government consulted NATO allies, and Moscow put its proposal in writing. What this actually means is that Christian Democrats Wörner, Alfred Dregger and Volker Rühe will try to persuade London, Paris and other NATO capitals to stop the U.S. from giving away the Bundeswehr's Pershing missiles, in case the written version of Gorbachov's proposal turns out to include them.

The Bundestag debate indicated that the FDP had accepted a compromise with the Christian Democratic and Christian Social



The Reagan administration favors the "zero option" to eliminate U.S. long-range Pershing 2 and cruise missiles from Europe.

## Gorbachov's proposals spoil NATO nations' grand design

Union parties: no open rejection of the Soviet offer so long as it eliminated only Soviet missiles and not the German Pershings. Genscher let the FDP position be presented by the party's floor leader, Wolfgang Mischnick, who let the cat out of the bag, but so subtly that only specialists were likely to notice.

Mischnick said that whether or not the Bundeswehr's Pershing 1A missiles are included is a question of significance for England and France, since the inclusion of these weapons would be a first step to disarming "third state" weapons systems.

Mischnick knows that the French in particular have fits at the slightest suggestion that Soviet-U.S. disarmament negotiations could produce pressure on "third states"—France to start with—to reduce their military forces. But is the Federal Republic of Germany, whose forces are all under U.S. control in NATO, a "third state"? If so, when did that start and where will it end? And in particular, are the Pershing 1A missiles, whose nuclear warheads are under U.S. key, the beginning of a "third state" nuclear force belonging to West Germany?

Egon Bahr, the Social Democratic Party's

has never been very inhibited about arousing such suspicions. Commenting on the Soviet-American missile deal, Strauss said it was "time to create a joint European nuclear weapons force. The discussions between the French and British on this theme could be the beginning," Strauss said, clearly implying they were not the end. The end would obviously include Germany.

Keeping the Pershing 1A (or eventually Pershing 1B) in the Bundeswehr may be seen as a way of keeping open the option of nuclearizing West German forces, or at least allowing them to possess dual-capable (nuclear or conventional warheads) missile systems. This could occur if the U.S., as rumor has it, decides to withdraw some of its forces from West Germany, the better to intervene militarily in other parts of the world. At that point, the U.S. might be willing to turn over the key to the Pershings to the Bundeswehr on the pretext that Bonn needed its own nuclear defense against the "conventional superiority" of the Warsaw Pact.

**Change of heart:** Such speculations are based on ambiguities that have flourished under Ronald Reagan. The new right in Washington no longer seem to share the

Strauss said in a recent interview in the newspaper *Bild-Zeitung* that it would be "a sign of weakness" if "320 million Europeans cannot set up an effective deterrent for 200 million Russians." This improbable "weakness" must be stressed regularly as the pretext for strengthening NATO.

Retired Brigadier Gen. Christian Krause is one of the many experts who argue that the "overwhelming conventional superiority" of the Warsaw Pact forces is a myth. Gen. Krause, a defense analyst for the Social Democrats' Friedrich Ebert Foundation, said recently that NATO consciously plays up this supposed conventional superiority of the Warsaw Pact to justify its nuclear forces. "All the figures given out to the public by NATO are manipulated," said Gen. Krause, who points out that NATO uses different sets of figures when addressing the folks at home than at serious occasions such as the Vienna negotiations on balanced force reductions.

**Demoralized:** Former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt endorsed the zero option in recent columns in the *New York Times* and his own Hamburg weekly *Die Zeit*, saying he was "not really afraid of the remaining conventional disequilibrium because I believe in the high capability and fighting spirit of the West German forces." Most significantly Schmidt condemned all nuclear tactical weapons on German soil as essentially demoralizing. "To tell the West Germans that their territory would be defended effectively only if we in the West were willing to be the first ones to strike with nuclear weapons is a sure way of undermining West Germany's will to fight if the need to defend itself actually arose."

Schmidt endorsed Robert McNamara's position that nuclear weapons are of use only to deter the other side from using them.

In the Bundestag debate, Egon Bahr observed that even in a conventional war in Europe, the heavy concentration of nuclear power plants would lead to a series of Chernobyl-type disasters. "There is an atomic deterrent in Europe independent of weapons," Bahr said the Social Democrats favored a zero option of all atomic weapons in Europe.

Faced with the Kohl government's foot-

### The trick is to use apparent U.S. gestures of withdrawal as an occasion to build up the forces of NATO's European "pillar."

most experienced specialist in security policy and disarmament issues, immediately objected. Bahr demanded "clarity as to the Federal Republic's non-nuclear status" and called it a "deception of public opinion to describe the Pershing 1A as a third-state system. Bahr warned against ambiguous statements that could arouse suspicion that West Germany wants to become a nuclear power.

The Bavarian leader Franz Josef Strauss

traditional opposition to Germany's nuclear armament. A few administration figures even give the impression they might relish a Soviet-German nuclear war that would wipe out both. This, of course, cannot be a West German policy goal. Rather, the "steel helmet" Christian Democrats such as Dregger view nuclear armament as a potential way to put political pressure on the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe.

Continued on page 10



Joel Bleifuss

## The seeds of corruption

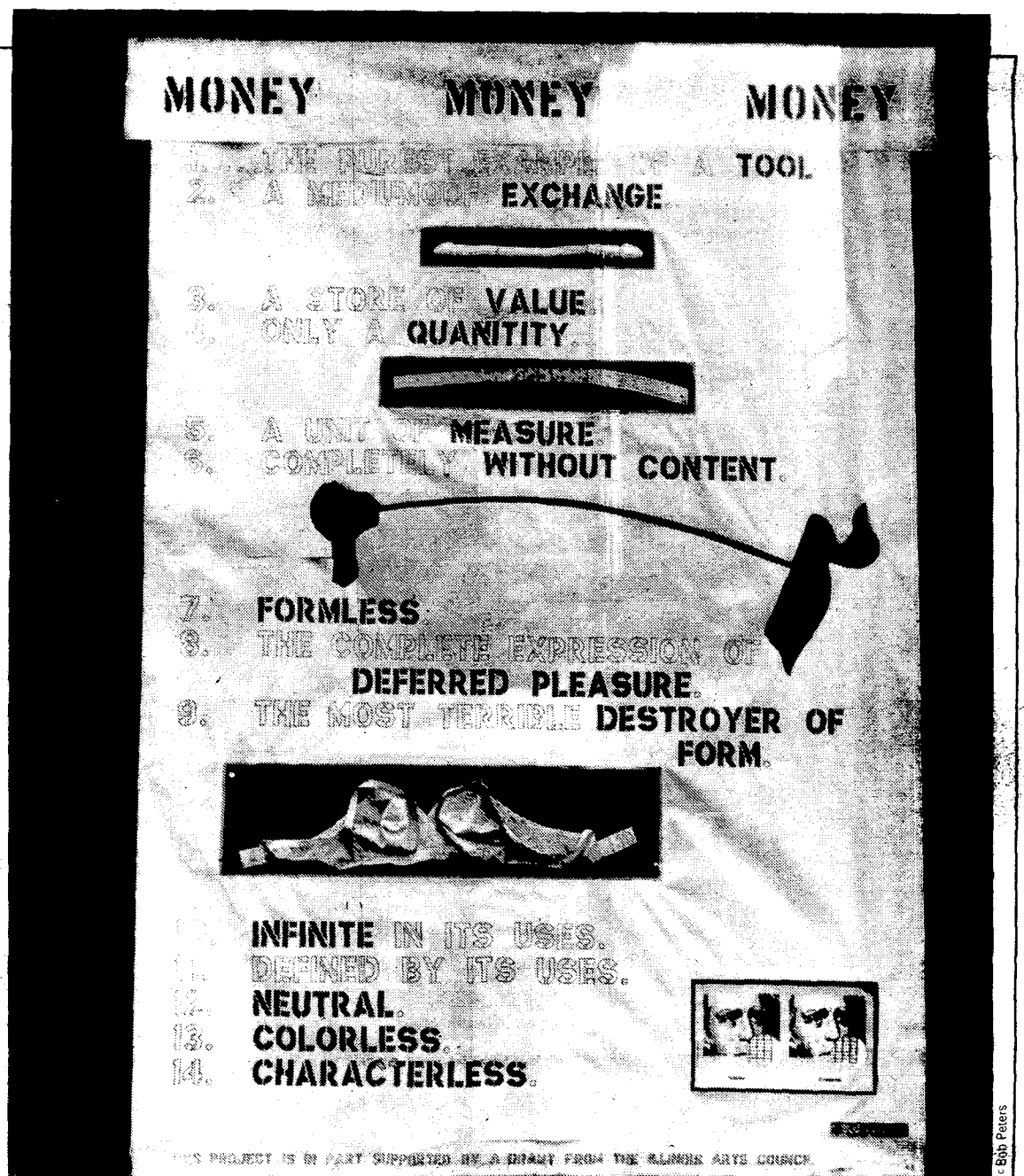
Agribusiness is greasing its gears to defeat the Harkin-Gephardt Family Farm Bill (see *In These Times*, Feb. 18). Larry Harper reports in the *Missouri Ruralist* that "a consulting firm in Washington, D.C., is soliciting \$25,000 from at least 10 of the country's major agribusinesses to finance the lobbying effort against the bill." That consulting firm is Leshner and Associates, a Washington-based lobbying group that recently sent out a letter to "Friends of Agriculture." The letter, published in the *American Agriculture Movement's Reporter*, heralds the existence of the newly formed Agricultural Policy Working Group (APWG). Members of this lobbying group include grain giant Cargill, chemical company Monsanto and food processors Nabisco and Pillsbury. APWG's mission is to "defeat mandatory controls" and change U.S. farm policy to one that "maximizes farm income and leads to a healthier and more efficient rural economy." But American Agriculture Movement President Corky Jones told *In These Times* that APWG's "entire thrust is to benefit the grain trade, the brokers, the processors and exporters. Their program, by lowering net farm income and lowering commodity prices, is going to eliminate those producers whose only income is coming from production. It would kill the family farm." Jones said that APWG represents "a select, power-hungry and greedy few" who have "a lot of money for the propaganda to defeat good common-sense legislation like the Family Farm Act." They also have powerful friends. Two former U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials, Bill Leshner and Randy Russell, manage Leshner and Associates. They worked under former Secretary of Agriculture John Block, who left the department in March 1986 and is now employed by the National Wholesale Grocers Association. His replacement is Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng, whose family owns a California-based seed business. Lyng was California's secretary of agriculture under then Gov. Ronald Reagan and has since been in and out of the USDA. A USDA spokesman told *In These Times* that before taking this most recent post Secretary Lyng was working at the consulting company he founded, Lyng and Leshner—which is now known as Leshner and Associates.

## Revoking nicknames

Sherri "Sunshine" Hitterman and Tracy "Buttercup" Riggs are two of seven hair stylists striking against Fantastic Sam's in Kennewick, Wash. The women have several complaints against the Memphis, Tenn., beauty shop chain. One is that Fantastic Sam's requires its more than 10,000 employees at 1,500 franchises in North America, Asia and Australia to adopt business nicknames like Bubbles, Skipper, Freckles, Peaches, Happy, Cookie and Cupcake. (Men get names like Doc and Superman.) The Kennewick beauticians are demanding that the company recognize their affiliation with the United Food and Commercial Workers Union. Fantastic Sam's officials refuse to comment on the matter. "They enforce the nicknames," Hitterman told writer Roger Yockey. "We want to get more benefits and get rid of the nicknames." Besides denying the hairdressers their identity, the nicknames make it difficult for customers to follow a stylist to a different beauty shop—that is, should they decide to break the Fantastic Sam's contract that prevents employees from working for competitors. Furthermore, if a Fantastic Sam's "Foxy" were to reveal her true name to a customer, she could get fired.

## Gag and die

The Reagan administration is asking Congress this year for \$84.3 million to continue the production of binary nerve gas bombs. Final assembly of the 155 mm "binary chemical artillery shells" is set to begin later this year. Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Dante B. Fascell (D-FL) is sponsoring an amendment to the defense authorization bill that would delay final assembly until Oct. 1, 1988. The House is scheduled to vote on the amendment on May 19. The Senate is then expected to offer a companion amendment. Martin Hamburger of Council for a Livable World told *In These Times*, "The nerve gas [called GB or sarin] is non-persistent. Its effects occur primarily through inhalation. The gas kills by disrupting the nervous system, causing convulsions, uncontrolled vomiting, diarrhea and finally asphyxiation by respiratory paralysis. Death comes within minutes or, less mercifully, hours, depending on whether the chemical enters through the lungs or the skin. Sub-lethal doses have caused long-lasting psychiatric and neurological disorders. Unprotected civilians, especially babies and children, would be the first victims."



The power of art: "Money" by Robert Peters of Chicago is one of the storefront exhibits at the Money + Power art show at Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin Street in New York City. The show, which will run through June 13, explores the relationship between money, art and power.

## Anti-apartheid leaders say armed struggle is only option.

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA—More violence will be the main outcome of South Africa's whites-only election, according to apartheid opponents in and outside the country.

North American and European anti-apartheid activists say they feel increasingly compelled to recognize armed struggle as just and to provide direct support to liberation movements after the May 6 election in which President P.W. Botha's Nationalist Party expanded its parliamentary majority and the ultra right-wing conservatives gained enough seats to replace the Progressive Federal Party as the official opposition.

"What choice is there?" asked African National Congress (ANC) President Oliver Tambo, who met with reporters the morning after the election. The results, he said, "blow the whistle for the ANC to intensify the armed struggle." Tambo was attending a World Council of Churches Anti-Apartheid Conference here in Lusaka.

Not the voting, but a massive election-day strike by workers in

the black townships was the most significant event of the day, said South African Council of Churches (SACC) General Secretary C.F. Beyers Naude, an Afrikaner clergyman revered by many activists.

Naude, who refused to vote in an election he saw as "a waste of time," offered an analysis interchangeable with Tambo's. The SACC leader saw the election as a white endorsement of "military rule" and predicted that Botha will claim a mandate to "crush or immobilize" all democratic movements. He noted that power has already shifted from the civilian parliament to a state security council and other military structures.

Both Naude and Tambo found a sliver of hope in the modestly successful showing—one victory and two narrow defeats—of three Nationalist Party rebels who campaigned for parliament on a program of "reform." The so-called New Nats showed there is "a strong and solid movement away from apartheid" even among Afrikaners, said Tambo, though not enough to forestall the violence ahead.

Violence will force South Africans and the international community to choose sides, according to Naude. This poses a dilemma for those in the anti-apartheid move-

ment who wish to support non-violent solutions. The only remaining choice, he said unhappily, is "support for lesser violence or larger violence." Churches and other opponents of apartheid must denounce the detentions, torture and military violence by the South African government but "cannot condemn the counterviolence of people who in desperation seek some form of armed resistance," he added.

This message may have shocked some delegates to the World Council of Churches' conference. Nonetheless, they heeded the plea for understanding of armed struggle, probably because it came from traditionally non-violent church leaders as well as the armed liberation movements. The meeting ended with the statement, "South Africa's war against its own inhabitants and neighbors compels the movements to the use of force along with other means to end oppression."

In the long run, this new acceptance of the inevitability of armed revolt may prove the most significant outcome of the whites-only election. An election, said Tambo, that challenges "the voteless majority to insure that this election is the last of its kind."

—Steve Askin



## Lights, cameras, war games!

TRUJILLO, HONDURAS—When William Walker, the filibuster from Tennessee, arrived in this coastal village in 1860 with his band of U.S. mercenaries he had one thing in mind: invading Nicaragua. It was his third attempt at pirating a nation and his last. When he landed on the beaches of Trujillo, the Hondurans took him captive and organized a firing squad.

Last week history replayed itself in Trujillo, as the U.S. Marines, Navy and Air Force staged an elaborate amphibious assault on a Central American beachhead. It was, as one U.S. Information Service officer in Tegucigalpa put it, "a great photo opportunity."

"Solid Shield '87," as its producers call it, set a record as the most elaborate war game ever held in the Western Hemisphere. The Honduran maneuvers will swell the number of American troops in that country to the unprecedented level of more than 5,000. Some 50,000 U.S. troops participated, directly or indirectly, in the exercise.

U.S. Embassy spokesmen in Tegucigalpa say the purpose of the

maneuvers was to "evaluate the joint interoperability of participating military units." They also admit the games send a "message" to the Sandinistas. Many Hondurans believe the war games were nothing less than a rehearsal for an actual invasion. "They are a show of force to tell Nicaragua that the U.S. is here, that the U.S. is preparing for an eventual intervention in Nicaragua," Efraín Díaz Arrivillaga, leader of the Christian Democratic Party told *In These Times*.

Like Díaz, many others in the country believe the war games undermine Honduran democracy and create an unwarranted atmosphere of tension. "They make people live in a state of panic," said Dr. Juan Almendarez, former dean of the medical school at the National University in Tegucigalpa. "People along the border become scared and because of that, alcoholism there has increased."

Despite the record numbers and photogenic dramatics of Solid Shield '87 this month's war games are merely an extension of maneuvers that have been held continuously in Honduras since 1983. In this year alone, thousands of troops have played war in maneuvers such

as "Blazing Trails," "Ahuas Tara," "General Tosta," and "Pegasus." Since 1981, more than 50,000 U.S. soldiers have trained in Honduras.

The U.S. military maneuvers have become institutionalized in Honduras, as has the U.S. military presence. Richard Armitage, assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, insisted last month that the U.S. military presence in Honduras is "temporary yet indefinite."

At the same time, Gen. John Galvin, commander of Southern Command, in April asked the Senate for \$65 million for additional military construction in Honduras. (Galvin will soon move to Europe to take over U.S. NATO operations. Cynical observers have said Solid Shield was his going-away present from the Pentagon.) Each year more air strips are leveled in Honduras, more roads paved, more bases constructed and more Americans trained. When these projects are finished, equipment is often left behind for the contras.

Solid Shield's war games will go down as just one more temporary chapter in the ongoing U.S. militarization of Central America.

—Brad Kessler

## The nuclearization of Canada's arctic waterways

Which superpower does not recognize Canada's sovereignty over its arctic waterways? It's Canada's ally and closest trading partner, the U.S. Washington has on several occasions in the last two years sent ships through the Northwest Passage without asking Ottawa's permission. The U.S. claims these are international waters and Canadians of all political stripes are furious.

During their recent summit, President Ronald Reagan and Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney discussed this issue, but resolved nothing. The prime minister could only get the president to say, "We are determined to find a solution, based on mutual respect for sovereignty and our common security and other interests." For Canadians, this was not enough. Amid the taunts of opposition members of Parliament, even the perennially optimistic Mulroney had to admit, "We have to make much more progress."

The long-dormant sovereignty issue was rudely revived in the summer of 1985, when Washington decided—without seeking Ottawa's permission—to send the huge U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker *Polar Sea* from a military base on the coast of Greenland to one in Alaska by way of the arctic waterways, including the Northwest Passage and the Beaufort Sea. Canada considers the waters surrounding its arctic islands to be within its jurisdiction for all matters, including shipping.

The U.S., however, only recog-

nizes a 12-mile Canadian coastal jurisdiction and insists the Northwest Passage is an international strait through which other countries, or at least the U.S., are entitled to passage. By sending the *Polar Sea* through it, without Canada's permission, the Reagan administration was both trying to make a point and set a precedent.

Washington's denial of Canadian sovereignty over the arctic waterways is as the *Globe & Mail* of Toronto put it a "double-edged sword." "For if the U.S. has such rights (to free transit without Canadian permission), then Soviet surface ships and submarines are also entitled to ply the waterway without Canada's leave. That is hardly conducive to U.S. interests."

Ostensibly, the U.S. insistence on its freedom of navigation through the Northwest Passage and the concomitant rejection of Canadian sovereignty stem from Washington's fear that recognizing Canada's claim to the arctic waterways would establish a legal precedent in other—possibly less friendly—parts of the world. If Washington conceded Canada's claims over the Northwest Passage, the reasoning goes, it might have to do the same for the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf or the straits in the Indonesian archipelago.

But this explanation does not suffice. As Pauline Jewett, external affairs spokesperson of Canada's New Democratic Party, told *In These Times*, the U.S. position is very peculiar. "They [the Reagan administration] don't want the Northwest Passage to be Canadian, but not an international waterway either."

Jewett thinks that this must be viewed in light of the new and ag-

gressive "forward strategy" the Reagan administration has adopted in the Pacific against the Soviet Union. Being able to roam freely in Canada's arctic waters would give the U.S. nuclear-armed Navy the great advantage of getting much closer to Soviet nuclear targets. In short, Washington is unilaterally nuclearizing the arctic waterways.

The New Democrats and many other Canadians said Jewett, are opposed to a deal, whereby the U.S. would recognize Canadian arctic sovereignty pro forma in return for Ottawa granting U.S. vessels full and free access.

The Canadian media have recently reported that just such a deal between Ottawa and Washington—recognition of Canadian sovereignty by the U.S. in return for "blanket clearance" for U.S. vessels in the arctic waters—is in the making. The Mulroney government has remained ambiguous, using verbal acrobatics to avoid giving a clear answer on whether it would give U.S. ships full and clear access to the arctic without prior Canadian approval, if the U.S. recognized pro forma Canadian jurisdiction.

For Jewett, Mulroney's reluctance to assert Canada's arctic sovereignty is no coincidence. She suspects that the sovereignty issue has fallen victim to Mulroney's eagerness to conclude a free-trade pact with the U.S. In return for that trade deal, Ottawa would give Washington carte blanche for militarizing arctic waterways. Recognition of Canadian arctic sovereignty would then be meaningless as Canada would be firmly embedded in Reagan's Pacific "forward strategy."

—Reto Pieth

## Boston U.'s school of propaganda

The U.S. Information Agency last year gave \$490,000 to Boston University's College of Communication and the Hearst Corp. to establish a news agency in Pakistan for the Afghan resistance movement. The university would teach the rebels journalism techniques and Hearst would distribute the resulting news stories. Michael Rezendes reports in *Columbia Journalism Review* that Hearst abandoned the project after protests from ethically minded Hearst newspaper editors. And last August College of Communication Dean Bernard S. Redmont resigned, saying he believed the rebels should attend journalism school in Boston, not in Pakistan, where it "would be perceived as open to a propaganda-type operation." Boston U. President John R. Silber (who has made a name as an academic reactionary) appointed H. Joachim Maitre as the Communication College's new dean. Maitre, an East German defector and B.U. journalism professor, is also a filmmaker. In 1985 he produced a documentary on the contras. International Business Communication (IBC), a company directed by Richard Miller and hired by the State Department to do PR for the contras, paid for Maitre's film. Carl Channell's National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty (NEPL) commissioned the film. (Both Miller and Channell, who raised money for Lt. Col. Oliver North's network, recently pleaded guilty to a charge of tax-fraud conspiracy involving the diversion of NEPL's tax-exempt monies to the contras through IBC.) Portions of the professor's film turned up in 1986 campaign advertisements against congressional opponents of contra aid. Maitre says he didn't know his film would be used this way and that he never met with anyone at NEPL. He admits, however, meeting North at a series of White House forums. At those forums, Maitre gave two talks, one on the military situation in Nicaragua and another on contra strategy.

## Redefining away radioactive waste

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is proposing a new policy that it says "could potentially reduce the burden associated with disposal of radioactive waste." Its proposal exempts low-level radioactive waste from current disposal regulations. The commission is currently looking at letters from the public commenting on the proposal and at the end of the year will decide whether to drop the idea or pursue it further. At present most low-level waste is put in containers and dumped at licensed landfills, but these landfills are rapidly filling up. Although last October the NRC did begin to allow exemptions on a case-by-case basis, under the proposed regulation all radioactive waste that "would not pose an undue risk to public health and safety or the environment" could be dumped or burned like all other garbage. So far the NRC has not decided how it would define what level of radioactivity poses no risk. According to the NRC, this regulatory change (i.e., the deregulation) would "significantly reduce societal costs" (meaning save the nuclear industry money) and would "result in no significant impact on the quality of the human environment." Too good to be true? Well, there are problems with the proposal. Nuclear Waste Campaign Director Mina Hamilton told *Power Line*, a publication of the Washington-based Environmental Action Foundation, "It reduces the burden to a very small economic sector that happens to have the ear of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. But as far as the general public goes, it's a tremendous burden." For example, if low-level radioactive waste is repeatedly dumped in one spot, it could eventually turn into a highly radioactive site and endanger public health.

## Female feticide

Female fetuses are being aborted in India as parents who want male children turn to amniocentesis to determine the sex of their unborn children. (Amniocentesis, a procedure that involves the removal and analysis of embryonic fluids, can, among other things, be used to determine a fetus' gender.) According to *Science for the People*, a recent study called "Sex Determination Tests and Female Feticide in Greater Bombay" found that 16,000 amniocentesis tests to determine gender are conducted in that city each year. An Indian politician who believes the procedure should be banned claims studies have revealed that all but one of 8,000 abortions recently performed in Bombay were on female fetuses. Since female infanticide in India already provides that 93 girl babies are registered as citizens for every 100 baby boys, the new-found convenience of female feticide is expected to widen that margin.



## POLITICS



Rainbow Coalition organizers hope their march will continue even if Jesse Jackson is not leading it.

# Rainbow hopes to shine beyond Jesse

By Salim Muwakkil

CHICAGO

JESSE JACKSON WAS DRAWING BIG CROWDS even before Gary Hart's fall raised his political stock. The crowds now are larger and, according to a Gallup Poll conducted for *Newsweek* magazine the week of Hart's campaign exit, Jackson is leading the crowded but largely unknown field of candidates; he was the first choice of 27 percent of the Democratic voters surveyed. Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis was second with 11 percent and Illinois Sen. Paul Simon polled 9 percent for third place.

Democratic officials tend to dismiss Jackson's leading position as a mere function of his celebrity and predict it will change once the presidential race gets underway in earnest. Others contend that Jackson has widened his appeal considerably and transformed himself into an authentic candidate with an actual chance to win the Democratic nomination.

But Jackson's sudden emergence into the political mainstream apparently has not diminished the enthusiasm of those left, black nationalist and civil rights forces that had joined the Jackson juggernaut because it challenged that mainstream. For many of those committed organizers, Jackson's lead in the polls is more important as a recruitment tactic for the National Rainbow Coalition (NRC) than for any political benefits he may gain.

While the NRC's national staff gears up for the rigors of the race, organizers in many of the states applying for NRC charters are struggling to create an institution that will survive topical political passions. According to Jackson aide Frank Watkins, "Twelve or more states have already completed the process to get sanctioned as NRC affiliates and a total of 37 states are currently attempting

to fulfill the requirements for official sanctioning." Although electoral politics will be the major concern of the national group, Watkins says, "creating a political movement for progressive social change" is the NRC's larger goal.

**Rainbow sans Jesse:** Watkins is deeply involved in Jackson's upcoming campaign and views the NRC from that sharp angle of vision. On the state levels, however, there is considerable confusion regarding the Rainbow's purpose. According to several participants at a recent NRC northeast regional conference, disagreements on everything from membership requirements and chartering procedures to political direction were expressed openly. But despite that dissension, many of those attending the conference came away with the conviction that the NRC soon would be a major organized force in the struggle for progressive change.

Such an accomplishment would put to rest the oft-heard charge that Jackson and his Rainbow supporters inherently are unable to structure and sustain a functioning organization. "There is no Rainbow Coalition without Jesse Jackson," writes Jerry Watts in *Democratic Left*, the organ of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). "And any organization that is so thoroughly beholden to the whims of one individual cannot be said to have a viable organizational identity." Watts' criticism echoes that of many who argue that the NRC is nothing more than Jackson's campaign vehicle.

Yet that criticism is off-base; the NRC's non-profit status prevents partisan activity and thus presents a structural barrier between the organization and candidate Jackson. What's more, the chartering provisions encourage decentralization and ensure the group's involvement in local issues.

"The NRC is designed not to be a campaign

appendage," explains Lawrence Hamm, interim state chair for New Jersey. "In fact, its non-profit status has angered many folks who wanted the group to be active in Jesse's campaign." Hamm says he shares some of that anger. "I also think the chartering process is too stringent," he adds. "In my opinion, we should be trying to get NRC chapters established as quickly as possible. But the by-laws are so intricate and demanding, the process simply can't be completed easily."

**Chartering requirements:** The NRC issues charters to state chapters exclusively, and only one charter is issued per state. The NRC also organizes on a Congressional District (CD) level. The state chapter affiliates with the NRC and the CD affiliates with the state chapter. Requirements for establishing

**While the NRC's national staff gears up for Jackson's presidential race, organizers in many states are struggling to create an institution that will survive topical political passions.**

a state chapter include the recruitment of at least 50 members in each of at least one-third of a state's CDs. Individuals are required to pay a \$25 membership fee. Members of CDs elect representatives to the steering committees, which in turn elect CD officers. These officers make up the state steering committee, which is the main policy-making unit of the NRC state chapter.

"The CD committees are the governing

bodies for NRC members in those districts," Hamm notes. "Their purpose is to organize and mobilize district residents around issues, engage in voter registration and educational campaigns and, within certain limitations, support candidates running for office."

When seeking a state chapter, applicants must submit an annual budget and operation plan to the NRC board. Both the CD and state steering committees must attempt to elect members "that reflect the diverse cultural, ethnic, racial, labor, peace, feminist, religious and other elements and groups that exist within the CD and state." The NRC board makes the final decision on eligibility of state chapter status. A state chapter or CD cannot endorse any candidate for political office without first obtaining written approval from the NRC board.

The stringency of these requirements was widely denounced at the regional conference. Many argued that in the attempt to demonstrate a readiness for hard-nosed organizing, NRC leadership went overboard when composing the by-laws. "How are we supposed to show that the Rainbow exists if we continue to bury all of our organizing efforts beneath all of that needless formality?" asks Anne Mitchell, an NRC organizer from Philadelphia. "The people think we've disappeared. And in a way we have—under the burden of all those requirements. We simply have to convince the national office to change those procedures," she says.

But according to many who attended the northeast conference, the national leadership has not responded to the aspiring affiliates' pleas. The fledgling group also is plagued by other problems, and some are blaming Jackson's impulsive and peripatetic behavior for producing those problems.

"There's very little synchronization between the national and state levels," explains one conference participant who requested anonymity—a request common to NRC members with harsh criticism of the leadership. "We seldom know when Jesse's coming to town, and when the news media contact us to check on his appearances we are uninformed. That makes us look bad as so-called officials of the NRC. It's also very difficult to advance constructive criticism about actions of the national staff; they don't seem to want to hear anything critical. We better fix these deficiencies or else we'll wind up like we were in 1984, when there was absolutely no accountability demanded of leadership."

The stakes are so high in this endeavor, however, that most NRC members are willing to endure the slights and occasional foul-ups that have confronted them. Growing pains, they insist. The process probably will become much smoother once the 1988 elections are out of the way and NRC leadership gets a respite from the rush of Jackson's campaign. If Jackson wins, however, remediation will take a while longer.

As media speculation mounts about who's the true frontrunner and who'll be the next candidate to fall, the NRC is attempting to seize the historical moment and squeeze out some benefits before it becomes history. "Right now Jesse has presented us with a historical opportunity to lay the basis for a truly progressive, multi-racial, multi-ethnic political movement," says Hamm. "He's attracted all kinds of people into the movement and we should do everything we can to make sure that movement bears fruit." □



# Caddell looks at future of 'minority party'

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

IT WAS PROBABLY GOOD LUCK THAT THE *MIAMI Herald* decided to expose Gary Hart's private affairs. If the *Herald* had not, another newspaper—tempted by an anonymous tip—would have, and if it had happened during the primaries or the general election, the effect on the Democrats might have been far more devastating, even fatal.

Yet Hart's withdrawal from the race reveals that the Democratic field is not a strong one. Besides Rev. Jesse Jackson, who is unelectable, none of the candidates has run

## THE DEMOCRATS

before or has a national reputation and the kind of experience that can match that of Vice President George Bush or Sen. Robert Dole. Democrats of their stature—New York Gov. Mario Cuomo and Sen. Edward Kennedy—are staying out of the race, perhaps in order to avoid the invasion of their personal lives that Hart endured.

Although the Iran-contra scandal will undoubtedly tarnish Bush and even Dole's reputation, a less experienced Democrat candidate, even with the help of scandal, will face formidable obstacles in winning the presidency. These obstacles were spelled out earlier this year by political consultant Patrick H. Caddell in a study commissioned by Nathan Landow's IMPAC (see *In These Times*, April 29). Caddell, who was pollster and adviser for George McGovern in 1972 and Jimmy Carter in 1976 and 1980, Gary Hart and then Walter Mondale in 1984, and now Sen. Joseph Biden, argues that the Democrats have become "the true minority party at the national level."

Caddell suggests that if the Democrats do not reverse the trend in presidential elections the party will be destroyed. "If a na-

**"If a national party continues to lose national elections...it is only a matter of time before those defeats are translated at lower levels."**

**—Pat Caddell**

tional party continues to lose national elections, particularly by great margins, it is only a matter of time before those defeats are translated at lower levels."

**A long shot:** In his 92-page paper, titled *An Analysis of the Presidential General Election Circumstances Confronting the Democratic Party in 1988*, Caddell points out that in the past five presidential contests, the Republicans have established a political base that makes them the odds-on favorite in any national election. The Republicans have won 23 states five straight times—totalling 203 out of a necessary 270 electoral votes. The Democrats have consistently won only the District of Columbia—amounting to three electoral votes. If states that the parties have won four out of five elections are counted, then the Republicans can claim 354 electoral

votes and the Democrats 13 (D.C. and Minnesota).

To win an election the Democrats would have to capture 65 percent of the electoral vote in states that have gone Republican in four out of the last five elections. "Even with a superior candidate, a compelling message, a unified party and a weakened GOP, the Electoral College handicap makes victory at best a long shot," Caddell writes.

He is equally discouraged about the Democrats' social base. In the last two elections, Caddell notes, Democrats have lost decisively among two groups that were formerly the basis of their majorities: male and younger voters. In 1984 71 percent of white males under 30 backed Ronald Reagan. In Michigan, which continued to suffer from recession in 1984, Reagan received as much as 75 percent of young white male votes. Caddell attributes Republican predominance among men to a greater faith in Republican economic performance—the criterion by which male voters have usually chosen candidates—and to a perception that the Democratic Party is the "feminine" party.

**Kennedy model:** Caddell warns Democrats against nourishing false hopes from their Senate victory in 1986. In that election, Caddell notes, a swing of 29,000 votes could have cost the Democrats the Senate. And the Democrats lost eight governorships and only increased their House margin by five. Caddell attributes Democratic successes to the White House's reluctance to "nationalize" the election and to Democrats' willingness to run on Republican policy assumptions.

He also warns against banking on the results of the Iran-contra scandal. In 1976, Caddell notes, with the Republicans crippled by Watergate, a recession and a bitter intraparty split, Democrat Jimmy Carter barely defeated President Gerald Ford.

Caddell dismisses the Mondale-Jackson strategy of building "a majority coalition of workers, blacks, women, etc." He writes, "Being a coalition party allows us to adapt to the changing contours of politics across this diverse nation. However, all that changes at the national level. The Republicans' homogeneity allows them to formulate and articulate a concise and uncomplicated national message, spoken with a single voice. By contrast, the Democratic Party is forced to articulate a message that is the product of the cacophony of all its coalition elements. It does not naturally lend itself to a concise and clear-cut national message spoken in unison."

A national strategy of building coalitions is particularly ill-suited to winning the support of the under-40 "baby-boom generation," Caddell argues. The baby-boom voters are "the first television generation. They see themselves as individuals first and only secondarily, if at all, as union members, workers, environmentalists, women or ethnics."

Caddell also dismisses the strategy—developed by Hubert Humphrey in 1968 and practiced by McGovern in 1972 and Mondale in 1984—of building a Democratic majority by winning the Northeast, the industrial Midwest and Pacific Coast. He points out that the South now holds more electoral votes than the North; that over the last five elections the majority of those states in which Democratic performance has improved the most have been Southern states like Tennessee, Arkansas, Georgia, North Carolina,

Louisiana and Mississippi; that key Humphrey states—Michigan, Connecticut, Washington and Maine—have been lost in every subsequent election; and that other key states like Illinois, New Jersey and California cannot be won by a targeted campaign, but only by a campaign that is successful nationally.

A victorious Democratic candidate must win both the Northeast and the South—the two most promising Democratic regions—while making a modest breakthrough in the Midwest and the Pacific Coast, Caddell believes.

His model is John Kennedy's 1960 campaign that directly appealed to a new generation of voters. Kennedy was an "inside insurgent" who sought to transform the Democratic Party without threatening the party structure. Kennedy's campaign, Caddell writes, was "thematic, futuristic, optimistic and relatively nonpartisan. He was the candidate of change in a contented country, selling the challenge of the future—exuding optimism, not gloom."

Rejecting the Democratic Leadership Council view that what the Democrats need is a more "moderate" or "centrist" candidate, he notes that the party nominating electorate consistently choose "the 'more liberal' candidate over the more 'centrist' candidate." But he describes an alternative that could be construed as centrist, at least on economic issues. "Much of the Democratic problem is that we have become the party of government, and the party of the status quo," Caddell writes.

## Hart: the candidate is gone, but not the constituency

Gary Hart's 1984 campaign was heavily influenced by Patrick Caddell's strategy of generational, future-oriented and anti-coalition politics. Hart combined this strategy with positions on issues that tried to steer a course between the liberalism of the New Deal and the economic individualism of the '70s and '80s.

Hart advocated active government, but did so in order to achieve economic growth rather than the redistribution of wealth. He called for reforming rather than simply reducing military expenditures. At the same time, he was probably the candidate most clearly identified with the post-'60s agenda of environmentalism, feminism and non-intervention overseas.

It is still too early to tell whether Hart's politics foreshadowed a new Democratic synthesis or whether they simply represented a sophisticated Democratic adaptation to the Reagan era. But through his political approach, Hart gathered together a distinctive following that transcended party and ideological labels.

In spite of having a perfect rating in Congress in 1985 from the liberal Americans for Democratic Action and in spite of his being an outspoken opponent of the Reagan budget and foreign policy, Hart continued to enjoy the support of Republican voters and voters who identified themselves as conservative rather than liberal.

In figures cited by the *American Political Report*, Hart drew one-fifth of the Republican vote against George Bush in a March CBS-*New York Times* poll. He was favored by 23 percent—more than any

**Wallace defection:** Caddell's pessimism about Democrats' national prospects is justified, and his rejection of the Mondale-Humphrey electoral strategy—still favored by many on the Democratic left—is entirely warranted. But Caddell falls short when explaining why the Democratic Party has fared so poorly in presidential elections since 1968.

That year the Democratic Party split between the anti-war, countercultural left that supported first Eugene McCarthy and then George McGovern and the Cold War liberals that backed first Humphrey and later Sen. Henry Jackson. This split between the McGovernites and the Cold War liberals dominated subsequent Democratic Party discussion, with each side blaming the other for successive electoral reverses. But the more fundamental division of 1968 was between both these groups and the racist and populist supporters of Alabama Gov. George Wallace.

While some Cold War liberal intellectuals like Jeane Kirkpatrick and *Commentary* editor Norman Podhoretz eventually joined the Reagan Republicans, the more significant mass defection was among Wallace supporters. This is critical to understanding the Democrats' failure in national elections to win the South and Northern states like Michigan.

The Wallace defection does not show up in conventional polling because Americans do not like to admit that race plays a role in their voting decisions. Although Americans favor the formal equalities secured by the early civil rights movement, many of them balk at further demands for social and economic equality. These deeper racial sentiments can only be inferred from voting history or discovered through the kind of in-

*Continued on page 10*

other Democrat—at last month's convention of the National Association of Evangelicals. According to a March *Atlanta Constitution* poll, Hart was the most acceptable candidate to Southern Democrats and the second choice of Georgia voters who backed Sen. Sam Nunn. And according to an April *Boston Globe* poll, Hart's strength in New Hampshire was among more conservative, long-time residents.

At the same time, Hart enjoyed the support of many of the most liberal voters. According to a May 5 Iowa poll, Jesse Jackson was the second choice of more Hart supporters than any other candidate.

Hart spoke to a different voter than the previous generation of Democratic politicians. His voter worked in services, liked rock'n'roll, worried about the ozone layer and nuclear war, distrusted Washington and red-faced podium-thumping politicians and disdained political labels and organizational niches. In a broader sense, Hart's constituency was the new working class created after World War II.

Washington pundits and lobbyists disliked Hart and found the kind of support he enjoyed incomprehensible. After Hart's withdrawal, Washington sawhorses Evans and Novak declared that the speed of Hart's departure demonstrated the "thinness" of his support. *Congressional Quarterly's* Alan Ehrenhalt, failing to discover Hart's identification with any "interest" or "bloc," dismissed him as rootless. But in fact, any Democrat who hopes to win in November will have to command the same kind of incongruous following that Hart did.

**—J.B.J.**



By Yukinori Ishikawa

**T**HE U.S. IS SUCH AN AGGRESSIVE DEFENDER of "democracy" in Nicaragua that it makes no bones about interfering with Managua's internal affairs. Yet in South Korea, where the clergy fast and students hurl stones in protest against an authoritarian government, the U.S. remains indifferent to the popular demands for democratization.

The latest round of Korea's postwar history of upheavals—the split-up of the peninsula and three coups d'état since 1960—has once again thrown the country into turmoil.

## SOUTH KOREA

And Ronald Reagan—like his predecessors—is standing on the sidelines, in effect giving tacit approval to strongman President Chun Doo Hwan.

The Reagan White House embarrasses Americans—and angers many South Koreans—when it patronizes this authoritarian government, which considers the Olympic Games more important than the country's democratization. On April 13 Chun took to the airwaves to plead with his 41 million compatriots for "understanding and cooperation" toward his "momentous decision" to suspend the attempt at constitutional reform until after the Seoul Olympics in September 1988.

Chun's political ambition, according to pundits, is to become South Korea's first president to peacefully hand over leadership to a successor. Given that, the question is how to select the next leader. "Having determined that it has become impossible to amend the constitution during my tenure," he declared in a televised speech, "I hereby announce that in accordance with the existing constitution, I will turn the reins of government over to my successor on Feb. 24, 1988, when my term of office expires."

Opposition forces have reacted to Chun's decision with indignation, charging that it will enable him to handpick an heir. Last year a wave of anti-government demonstrations by students, church and labor organizations forced the former general who seized power in a 1980 coup to promise reluctantly that the country's next leader would be chosen democratically.

Under current law South Koreans vote for 5,600 electors who, in turn, choose the president. But restrictions on the election process take advantage of South Korea's social structure to maintain the status quo. Electoral delegates must be recommended as "men of virtue" by at least 100 voters. In a Confucian society this means those in power—landlords, industrialists and other local magnates allied with the government.

Chun blamed the non-conciliatory opposition, which has advocated direct presidential elections, for blocking the path to constitutional reform. In the year-long debate the ruling Democratic Justice Party (DJP) insisted on a cabinet system headed by a prime minister chosen by legislators. He said: "The opposition has not only adamantly rejected [the DJP proposal for a British-style cabinet system] but has also made the prospects for any constitutional reform by consensus extremely dim by getting itself involved in severe intraparty chaos and infighting."

The largest single opposition party, the



President Chun Doo Hwan considers the upcoming Olympic Games more important than the country's democratization.

## Chun dodges reform, blames the opposition

New Korea Democratic Party (NKDP), which at one point held 103 of the 276 seats in the National Assembly, recently broke up over the electoral question. South Korea's best-known dissidents, Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam (they are not related), walked out of the NKDP in early April along with 73 of the party's 90 National Assembly members to create a new party called the Reunification Democratic Party (RDP). The constitutional debate took a new turn late last year when NKDP's chief Lee Min Woo, a veteran parliamentarian who initially served as a figurehead for the two Kims, disagreed with them on the electoral issue.

The Kims joined forces and gave the party's titular leadership to Lee two years ago. They argue that Chun's successor should be chosen directly by the people, a system that would give the opposition its best chance of taking over. Last December, however, Lee hinted that the NKDP might support the government's cabinet system if "the government and ruling party take measures for the nation's democratization, such as the release of political prisoners."

The Kims quickly began scheming to remove Lee from the party's presidency. That fanned the flame, and the party feud reached a critical stage in March when an NKDP legislator who had launched bitter personal attacks on the two Kims invaded the party headquarters with a group of thugs. The brawl—which included punching and throwing ashtrays—gave the Kims and their followers a pretext to part company with Lee's NKDP.

In a bid to gain a hold on the unstable political situation, Chun's ruling party rebuked the Kims' breakaway as undemocratic, as a "plot to wipe out our efforts to reach agreement on a revision of the constitution." Yet many South Koreans believe the opposition was egged on, and doubt that Chun made a serious attempt at political reform in the first place. "The fact that the government gave up the constitutional reform effort even without dialogue with the new party shows that it had no intention to revise the constitution from the start," fumed Lee Ki Taek, a former NKDP vice president.

**Political observers believe that Chun's new offensive is aimed ultimately at removing the Kims from the country's political arena.**

With Kim Dae Jung under house arrest, the future of the new party is anything but rosy. Soon after the NKDP split, outspoken opposition lawmaker Yoo Sung Hwan was sentenced to one year in prison for violating the National Security Law. In his address before the National Assembly last fall he called into question the government's anti-communist policy and argued that the unification of the divided land should be on the agenda.

The court ruled that Yoo, now a member of the new breakaway party, broke the law by distributing the text of his speech to the press before he actually addressed the National Assembly.

In his Easter message Cardinal Stephen Kim Sou Hwan lamented: "The people's dream for constitutional reform, which was expected to open a new brighter era, has been miserably shattered under the intrigue of deceit and partisan interest." The Roman Catholic prelate, whose political clout spills over to non-Catholic South Koreans, warned that Chun's "agonizing decision" will leave the community "soaked with tear gas once again." True, within days after the April 13 announcement a total of 13,000 students from more than 20 colleges across the country took to the streets in protest, and there were scattered clashes between demonstrators and police.

Political observers believe that Chun's new offensive is aimed ultimately at removing the Kims from the country's political arena. Before the TV camera Chun discarded them as has-beens: "We cannot entrust the future of our nation to persons who are tinged with thoughts of old eras. Political parties must urgently strive to accept and nurture a new generation of untainted and competent politicians who will be capable of leading the country in this transitional period."

**Heir apparent:** Roh Tae Woo, chairman of the ruling DJP, is the man most frequently mentioned as the country's next leader. The former general, who was instrumental in providing backup troops when Chun staged his military takeover in December 1979, is expected to be nominated DJP president—and a presidential candidate—in a party convention next month. Then in December electoral college delegates will likely pick him as Chun's successor.

The U.S. government, which acknowledged that the question of constitutional revision is a South Korean internal affair, is not sending signals of disapproval to the Chun regime. U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, in a visit to Seoul a year ago, expressed support for Chun: "Orderly change is the name of the game. Democracy is moving along pretty fast in Korea. The country is making the transition to democratic rule under impressive circumstances." Apparently, despite some privately expressed discomfort at Chun's hardline policy among U.S. officials in Washington, the U.S. position remains unchanged.

Many South Koreans, offended by Shultz's ludicrous and insensitive remarks, have understandably turned their backs on the U.S. Anti-American sentiment has been taking root most notably among students, who charge that the U.S. supports Chun's authoritarian government for its own military and economic gains. The U.S. maintains about 40,000 troops in South Korea, one of the strategic areas where the U.S. is said to have a nuclear shield against the Soviet Union. Similarly, South Korea as a cheap-labor production center has been built into the U.S.-designed global economic system—and hence is subject to exploitation by U.S. multinationals. The U.S. commitment to democracy appears to be a pretext to throw its weight around. □

Yukinori Ishikawa writes regularly for *In These Times* from Japan.



## By Bill Girdner

BUENOS AIRES

**T**HE GREAT PUBLIC COURTROOM IN THE federal courthouse here seems like a church, with stained glass windows, a lofty ceiling and pews. Standing in the empty and quiet court, prosecutor Luis Morena Ocampo recalls a day in the same room in 1985 during the trial of one of the generals who led Argentina down the path of military terror.

It was on that day that Morena summed up the sometimes sobbing testimony of 833 witnesses against former military President Gen. Jorge Rafael Videla. Following the summation thundering applause came from those packed into the court.

As the chief judge gavelled for silence and finally ordered the hall cleared, they continued to applaud. For 10 minutes it lasted, even as they filed out.

It has been well over a year since Videla and four others were convicted in connection with the deaths, detention and torture of thousands of Argentines. (Videla was sentenced to life imprisonment.) But the applause still rings in Morena's ears.

"Beautiful," he says, "a beautiful moment."

This now-silent chamber, with all the power and hope that it contains, has more to do with a short-lived military rebellion last month—and with the jubilant demonstrations when it was abandoned—than anything else in Argentina. It is in this courtroom and others in Argentina that military officers have been, and will continue to be, tried for torturing and killing civilians during the 1976-83 period known as "the repression."

Under the military governments in those years 9,000 people "disappeared." Clandestine torture chambers were set up in hospitals and schools. Argentines were arrested, raped, tortured and killed based on the merest suspicion that they had anti-government views.

Putting former military leaders on trial represents a chance for Argentina to abandon a turbulent history punctuated by military generals marching on the presidential palace and taking power. And it is through the lessons learned in these trials that many of those committed to a civilian government here hope the Argentine people will refuse to support a military takeover in the future.

**Guns, votes and trials:** As the rebellion demonstrated, those hopes and thoughts are fragile.

On Easter Sunday, Argentine President Raul Alfonsín entered an army base where rebel military officers were barricaded in opposition to a new wave of prosecutions of military officers for human rights abuses. Alfonsín won a clear victory. The rebels gave up with some concessions from the government, and the leader of the rebellion was cashiered.

But last week Alfonsín seemed to cave in to the pressure of a recent series of such rebellions. He asked the Argentine congress to adopt legislation that could abort prosecutions for most of the more than 220 officers charged. Alfonsín's apparent concession on the prosecutions reflects the fragility of civilian governments in Latin America, despite the "Spring of Democracy" that has arrived to much of the continent.

"There are a lot of governments in Latin America where democracy is paper-thin, and the military elite exercises most of the power and can act with impunity, where democratic governments are more of a show," says Arvid Neier, co-chair of the international human rights group Americas Watch.



## ARGENTINA

Argentine President Alfonsín (center, with mustache) wants to end most prosecutions of military officers for their part in "the repression."

# Old and new leaders face different kinds of trials

Neier and other human rights experts say that prosecutions for human rights abuse such as those in Argentina are critical in strengthening and ensuring the survival of democratic governments.

Human rights abuses that could subject military officers to prosecution have been alleged in the nations of Chile, Paraguay, Brazil, Colombia, Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador.

Uruguay, neighboring Argentina, is currently debating repeal of an amnesty for military officers who held power prior to the current civilian government. Citizens have circulated petitions calling for prosecutions and the matter is expected to come to a national vote later this year.

It's not yet clear how Alfonsín's proposal to end most of the prosecutions will fare in the Argentine congress. It is clear that such a move would have a strong impact on the future of both the region and the country.

**Ghosts:** The trials put on the public record the government terror that happened in secrecy and in cold blood. Almost any conversation about the military government now raises images of the disappeared, like ghosts. Those ghosts stir in a government-published book, thick as a college dictionary, that lists in small computer print the names of disappeared. They are in the portraits carried on banners at political demonstrations and in the accounts of deadly purges.

And they shine in the suddenly red and wet eyes of Emilio Mignone.

"My daughter disappeared on the 14th of May, 1976," he says. "We don't know anything about her. It's more awful, very painful, not knowing what happened to her. Imagining her torture, imagining her disappearance."

The director of the Center for Legal and Social Studies, the strongest human rights group here, Mignone describes squads of soldiers and police who proceeded systematically from door to door with lists. "They took rank-and-file leaders in factories, schools, universities, among intellectuals, the Catholic Church, in the slums—like my daughter," he says. "She worked as an emergency relief worker in the slums. For this act, she was detained."

"When the military is down," says Mignone "you must keep them down. If they become more powerful, it will not be possible."

Mignone and others say that in order to prevent the military from regaining its old power to intervene in Argentine politics—and in order to show clearly that such conduct is wrong—the prosecutions are necessary.

"In Argentina," adds prosecutor Morena, "society sees that all must follow the law, including the powerful—that we are all subject to the law. In the past, people believed the law applied only to the weak and not to the powerful."

**Party politics:** That theme has been until now a traditional tenet of Alfonsín's Radical Civic Union. The Radical party is compared by Argentines and Western diplomats to a Social Democratic party in Europe. It is top-

## President Alfonsín has apparently caved in to military pressure. He's now calling on the Argentine congress to pass legislation ending most future military prosecutions.

heavy with lawyers and doctors. And in addition to respect for the Argentine constitution, its driving principles have been respect for civil liberties, clean government and fair elections.

Opposing the Radicals is the Justice party that dwells on the memory and policies of late President Juan Peron. Peron is compared by Americans here to the late Louisiana governor, Huey Long. The "Justicialistas" carry forth the same brand of populism, gathering in disparate social and political subgroups.

But beneath that surface of democracy flows a powerful current of fascism, according to many Argentine and U.S. observers here.

"The Peronists are fascists, plain and simple," says Miguel Ekmekdjian, a constitutional law professor and adviser to the Argentine congress. He says a bulwark of the Peronist alliance is the CGT, a huge union

confederation that, in his opinion, has often been the first line of support for military takeovers in the past.

But others defend the Peronists as a home-grown party with some similarities to the U.S. Democratic Party, representing workers as well as intellectuals without imitating the priorities of a European party. And some Peronists have already come out strongly against Alfonsín's call to curtail prosecutions.

**Darkness and light:** Further underlying Argentina's political future is what Argentines themselves say is a dark national soul, preoccupied with death and violence and dominated by a profound skepticism. Says Ekmekdjian, "We have this sense of death, of the past, this tragic sense of life that says if you don't think like me, then I want to eliminate you."

The future of their nation, many Argentines say, lies in developing a greater tolerance for opposing viewpoints, in rejecting the demagoguery that vaulted past leaders into power and in rejecting the quick military fix for political or economic trouble.

Many in Argentina hope the trials of army and naval officers will serve as a political motor that pulls their nation away from military governments and toward peaceful democratic politics.

A new wave of charges, filed to beat a February deadline, have received front-page treatment from the wide range of newspapers here. Previous trials of military officers received daily press coverage and nightly news shows broadcast long segments of testimony.

Undersecretary for Human Rights Eduardo Robossi says a central purpose of the trials is to reveal the truth of what had happened after such a long period of secrecy and lies from the military government—and thereby to discredit military governments in general. It is for that purpose, for example, that the trials were conducted through oral examination and argument. A special law was passed to change the antiquated Spanish system that relied solely on written argument and evidence.

"No inhabitant has been able to avoid seeing the problem," says Robossi.

**Bill Girdner** is a Los Angeles-based lawyer and journalist.



## Euromissiles

Continued from page 3

dragging, the party said it was starting a nation-wide campaign of protests and petitions urging acceptance of the zero option.

SPD Chairman Hans-Jochen Vogel jumped at the opportunity—rare these days—to emphasize that the Social Democrats were defending the U.S. position against the right. This accord is superficial: the SPD wants to continue the nuclear disarmament process beyond the zero option, whereas the Reagan administration is still going ahead with Star Wars and other huge arms programs it has no intention of abandoning. Although the SPD is sensitive to accusations of anti-Americanism, polls show that German esteem for American leadership is at an all-time low. Reagan is slightly less popular than Gorbachov, the first time a Soviet leader has ever been preferred to an American president.

Although a majority of public opinion favors the zero option, disarmament has never been a successful electoral issue, and most NATO countries have right-wing governments. Only Spain's Socialist Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez wholeheartedly endorsed the proposed Soviet-American agreement and noted with approval that it "will lead to others."

**And in France:** That it will "lead to others" is just what creates near panic in the closed circles of France's military industrial complex. In Paris, the talk is of creating "fire-breaks" to stop the spread of deadly zero options into categories of French armaments.

The French have been warned: Gorbachov

does not intend to stop with the long-range Euromissiles and their shorter-range brothers; he plans to follow up with offers to scrap short-range missiles as well. This could eventually raise questions about the French Hades missile (scheduled for 1992) and the neutron bomb.

The French defense community is split between those who view Gorbachov's disarmament offensive as the most serious national emergency since the 1940 Nazi invasion, and those who insist that the zero option does not necessarily signal "the Apocalypse." The champion of this more moderate school of thought is President François Mitterrand, who has publicly endorsed the Soviet-American Euromissile zero option.

Essentially, the Mitterrand position is that, whatever others do, nobody can force the French to give up their nuclear missiles. No matter what Gorbachov offers, and no matter what others say, France can always say no. France can stop the insidious spread of zero options. In the same vein, former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing insists that Europeans should "categorically refuse" to discuss battlefield nuclear weapons below the 500-kilometer range.

To facilitate such a refusal, Mitterrand has employed his gift for words to come up with a doctrinal subtlety meant to keep the Hades and neutron bomb safe from disarmament. France, according to the Mitterrand doctrine, unlike the superpowers with their strategic and tactical systems, has only one single central strategic system. Everything is a part of that whole. The Pluton and Hades missiles are thus not "tactical" but "pre-strategic." Ergo, France does not have any tactical nuclear weapons, ergo, France is not concerned

with tactical nuclear disarmament.

While espousing this fine theological doctrine, French leaders continue to emphasize their devotion to their German neighbors and determination to share fate and defense systems. At the same time, the French panic did not extend to the Bundeswehr's Pershing 1A missiles. Indeed, that was the only one of Gorbachov's disarmament offers that the whole French establishment initially found acceptable (at least until Dregger and company twist their arms). Thus the French establishment, while in direct conflict with the tactical nuclear disarmament preferred by German Social Democrats from Egon Bahr to Helmut Schmidt, is not really in tune with the German right either.

**Holding on:** In fact, each military establishment is clinging to its missiles and planning more. Even as it readies its deal with Moscow, the Reagan administration is planning to build up shorter-range missile forces. The Pentagon is set to deploy a modernized version of the short-range Lance rocket in Germany. Caspar Weinberger is pressing hard for "Star Wars" tests that would violate the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

In short, there is no sign of real high-level willingness to pursue the disarmament process that all agree is genuinely sought by Gorbachov. Instead, the Pentagon seems eager to show that a partial disarmament deal with Gorbachov will not slow down the rest of the arms race. European leaders are scarcely better.

If the Euromissile agreement turns out to be a sham, the Soviet military might overthrow Gorbachov. One can imagine the official crocodile tears that would then flood the Western media, and the private rejoicing of NATO strategists and arms contractors. With a military dictatorship in Moscow, life as we know it could speed ahead faster and faster to its inevitable end.

This is petty farce with all the makings of major historical tragedy. ☐

## Democrats

Continued from page 7

depth surveys that political scientist Stanley Greenberg conducted among Michigan voters.

Underlying racial conflicts help explain why Democrats could repeatedly lose national elections yet continue to hold their own in local and state elections. The power of incumbency has been an important factor, but equally important has been local Democrats' ability either to reject or to avoid the national party's commitment to affirmative action or redistributive welfare policies.

Racial conflict also helps explain how presidential results cannot be inferred from national voter-preference statistics. Voter-preference statistics show continuing support for Democrats over Republicans and a growing correlation between income and party preference. But in national elections this breaks down as Democrats suffer from the defection of low and middle-income white males.

In 1988 racial factors could play an even greater role than they did in 1984. Having survived his association with anti-Semitic black nationalist Louis Farrakhan, Jesse Jackson could be a stronger candidate than he was in 1984. But his prominence within the Democratic Party symbolizes for many whites a Democratic submission to an agenda of advancing blacks at the expense of whites.

In 1988 the Republicans may need to exploit these racial attitudes to overcome the disabilities of scandal and internal division. They may choose to appeal covertly to these attitudes by attacking the crime rate or welfare cheating.

Caddell may have failed to acknowledge the importance of racial conflict simply because it fails to show up in opinion polls; but it is more likely that he, like many Democratic politicians and political consultants, is unwilling to broach the subject publicly. ☐

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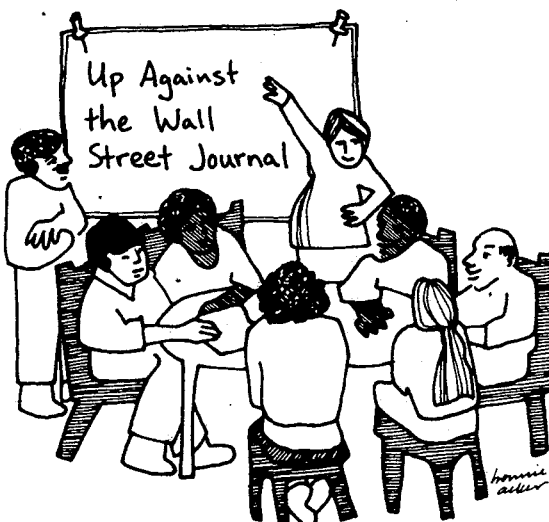
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By Jeffrey Cox

LONDON

**H**ARDLY ANYONE IN BRITAIN BELIEVES THE Labour Party will win the recently announced June 11 general election. As recently as January, Labour ran the ruling Conservative Party a close race in the polls. But after a humiliating defeat in a March parliamentary special election, Labour began to lose ground to the centrist Social Democratic-Liberal Alliance. Now all the polls predict a new parliamentary majority for Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Some polls even show Labour coming in third. A strong showing in local elections this month further bolstered Conservative hopes.

As the British left faces up to the prospect of another five years of rule by Thatcher, many Labour supporters are asking what went wrong. Labour leader Neil Kinnock has tried hard to pull the party together since its disastrous 1983 defeat, and to persuade its warring right and left wings to agree to a campaign platform that emphasizes more spending on public works, education and health care. Every poll shows that voters care about those issues more than any others—and agree more with Labour policies than those of the other parties.

**Bomb in the polls:** Labour's non-nuclear defense policy, on the other hand, has hurt it in the polls. When it comes to scrapping all nuclear weapons, many traditional Labour voters stop short. The logic of "deterrence" is deeply entrenched in the minds of older and middle-aged voters who think in terms of Munich and the appeasement of Hitler. Other Labour supporters object to Britain's possession of every existing weapons system when asked about them one at a time, but become very nervous in the face of Labour's proposal to abandon all of them at once.

But Labour's recent slide in the polls cannot be blamed on its non-nuclear defense policy, which has been widely debated for several years and did not prevent Labour from leading the Conservatives a few months ago. There is great frustration in Britain, even among Conservative voters, about lack of progress in arms control. Chernobyl and the British-aided U.S. bombing of Libya have not been forgotten, and most British voters want U.S. cruise missiles out of their country. Labour is ahead of public opinion on this issue, but not so far ahead that they cannot win an election.

The best evidence that defense is not at the heart of Labour's problems lies in the rhetoric of their Conservative and Alliance opponents. Instead of attacking Labour unilateralism, the party's enemies and their allies in the popular press have been working overtime to exploit a deeply rooted wave of homophobia and racism in order to detach traditional Labour voters from their party.

**The "loony left":** The current code words in the practice of racial politics are "loony left," the phrase invariably used by the country's many right-leaning newspapers when describing the anti-racist policies of many Labour local governments, especially in and around London. These "loony" policies include affirmative action in hiring and contracting, purging school textbooks of racist images and funding voluntary agencies to promote the interests of black and Asian communities.

Although far from being extremist by U.S. standards, these policies have set off a fierce reaction. The popular newspapers daily accuse the Labour Party of everything from

## As general election draws close Labour's hopes slide away

banning the song "Baa Baa Black Sheep" in kindergartens to placing anti-racist "thought police" in classrooms to monitor teachers. By fostering the "loony left" issue, Conservative and Alliance politicians have been able to draw attention away from Labour's popular policies on employment, health care and education.

A second element of "loony leftism" is gay rights. A small number of Labour educational authorities promote positive images of gays

### BRITAIN

and lesbians in school textbooks and sponsor educational programs for adolescents concerned about their sexual identity. This upsets many parents, including Pentecostalist West Indians and Pakistani Moslems who live mainly in Labour-dominated school districts. The controversy delights Conservative politicians, who never fail to introduce the word "homosexual" when discussing problems of local government.

Terrified into silence, Labour's national leadership has abandoned gay and lesbian Labour Party members to homophobia. With no defenders in the media or politics, gay and lesbian Labour politicians and officeholders put up with a steady round of verbal abuse and physical violence at public meetings, in the streets and even in their homes.

**One side to every story:** Without reading British newspapers every day, it is difficult to appreciate the right-wing bias of most of Britain's popular press. The widely read *Daily Mail*, for instance, has changed its attitude toward the left very little since the '30s, when it cheered on Hitler's attacks on German socialists and trade unionists. Rupert Murdoch's *Sun* attracts readers by

publishing photographs of bare-breasted pinups on the same page with lurid tales of homosexual politics in the Labour Party. Daily newspapers reach a larger percentage of the public in Britain than in the U.S. On the "loony left" issue they have demonstrated their ability to define the political agenda to Labour's disadvantage.

In one important respect, the Labour leadership has played into the hands of its headline-writing enemies this spring. Kinnock believes, and not without good reason, that a Labour victory requires him to distance himself from the left wing of his own party. But his struggle against the left has turned into an internal power struggle with a momentum of its own, and has been carried on far too long. On the eve of a general election, Kinnock's ongoing attempts to discipline and expel left-wingers have given the public the impression of a party divided and unfit to govern.

While the press has been attacking the Labour Party for "loony left" anti-racist and anti-homophobic policies, the Labour leadership has carried on a surprisingly bitter parallel campaign against those black leaders—especially black women—who advocate "black sections" within the Labour Party. The idea of a black caucus within the party hardly shocks a U.S. Democrat, but the Labour leadership has treated the idea as if it were, in the words of Deputy Leader Roy Hattersley, "the political equivalent of AIDS."

**The lost left:** These damaging divisions, and the opinion polls, are very discouraging for anyone in Britain who cares about nuclear disarmament or the future of socialism. In the heat of intraparty warfare, Kinnock's enemies on the left often overlook his firm

commitment to a non-nuclear defense policy. Socialists in the Labour Party always argue that the leadership should campaign to persuade the electorate of the wisdom of its policies rather than swaying with every opinion poll. The party has done precisely that with its non-nuclear defense policy. A Labour victory, combined with the very rapid evolution of Soviet defense and foreign policy, might create the first real opportunity to do something serious about slowing down the arms race.

In domestic policy, democratic socialists everywhere need practical demonstrations from the European socialist parties that show democratic politics and progress toward a socialist society are compatible. European socialism's record since World War II has not been very instructive.

Hardly anyone still believes in nationalization as the road to socialism, but what should be in its place? Unable to answer that question, British socialists of all varieties appear to have lost their way. There is much talk of the death of socialism and the decline of the working class and the likelihood that Labour will never form another government.

Thatcher, on the other hand, appears to believe that the British working class is still much too powerful. She talks of using a third term to "destroy socialism" in Britain, and the Conservatives are already making plans for a new round of attacks on Labour strongholds in local government, education and the unions.

**Future plans:** Kinnock, to his credit, recognizes the need to redefine socialism, and talks about developing new forms of "social ownership" such as worker cooperatives, municipal ownership and employee stock-ownership schemes. These proposals remain vague. Many people objected to nationalization, but everyone knew what it was. Would social ownership mean genuine worker control, or merely stock ownership schemes designed to undercut collective bargaining? Would a Kinnock government put large amounts of money into an expansion of the cooperative sector of the economy?

Tony Benn and others in Labour's left-wing Campaign Group are already laying plans for "relaunching" the Labour Party after the election, win or lose, on a more explicitly socialist and anti-racist basis. They have yet to go much beyond the Labour leadership in developing an intelligible democratic path to social ownership. But they do recognize that sexual and racial politics can no longer be dismissed as a diversion from "real" issues.

If Labour confounds the pollsters and wins the election, Kinnock will have his own opportunity to redefine socialism with a major commitment to new forms of social ownership. But the wounds opened by his struggle against the left will remain regardless of the election results, and Kinnock will have to take steps to heal them.

If Labour loses, the task of maintaining some degree of party unity will be much more difficult. There may be a new exodus of party right-wingers to the Social Democratic Party, and there will certainly be a fierce struggle to assign the blame for defeat. If Kinnock continues to regard the left as the source of all problems the party could dissolve into an internal war that would last for years.

Jeffrey Cox is an associate professor of history at the University of Iowa. He is in London to work with the Institute of Historical Research.



Labour leader Neil Kinnock has felt the need to distance himself from the left.



# THE HOLLYWOOD FAULT LINE

By Jon Rappoport

LOS ANGELES

**A**NDY WHIT IS SO UNKNOWN THAT EVEN THE unknown video freaks in Los Angeles can't tell you what he's done. "Am I angry?" he asks, standing at the corner of Sunset and La Cienaga in Hollywood, shaking his head, slackly holding a beat-up old black video camera down his leg, like Clint Eastwood's magnum.

He came out here during lunch hour to shoot a few feet of tape for his latest unknown production, *Punch Drunk*, about different kinds of alcoholics in Los Angeles. There's a staggering, falling-down kind (downtown), the mixed-drink crowd in Beverly Hills and the Palisades (martini sippers with faded eyes and \$3000 watches) and even the mildly inebriated office crowd (Wilshire district). Here, on La Cienaga, he hoped to spot a few random shopper-drunks mixing lunch and boutique-browsing. It's raining, however, and he can't get a good line on anybody.

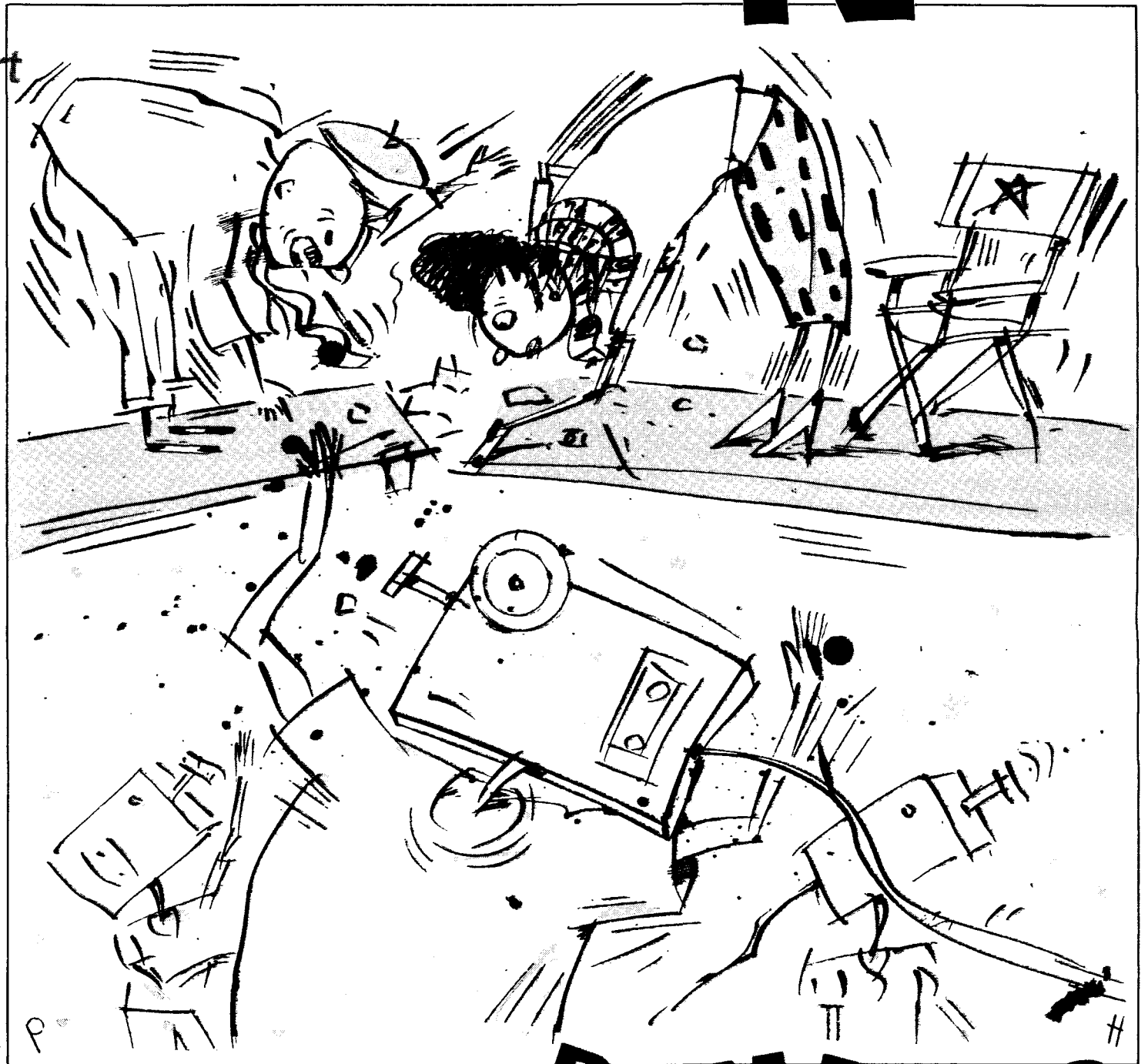
But Andy Whit has more to be angry about than the rain. He's here in L.A., where suburban teen-angst epics become \$30 million movies. And he's not seeing a dime—not treatment money or script money or overdub money or music money.

Above him on the pyramid of video obscurity are the semi-unknown video-makers who show their work in the crumbling art galleries that litter the city. Seven people sit in flaking metal chairs and applaud lightly after gazing for 20 minutes at a small screen, where a man knelt on a living room rug and broke panes of glass, slowly and methodically with a tack hammer. This is "what-does-it-mean? -don't-ask-questions-because-you-might-look-stupid" video art.

**Video shockwaves:** Above these semi-unknowns are the political and environmental and documentary video-makers, and they're making disturbing waves. The shock is turning into a video explosion that could undermine Hollywood or even overtake it. The foundations are sending video artists money. The galleries are showing them. Los Angeles' new Museum of Contemporary Art is committed to video. And in lofts downtown people pay the price of a movie ticket to look at something more daring than high-school bubbleheads crashing daddy's car into the shopping center drug store.

It seems that the natives are getting restless in movieland, and the consequences will undoubtedly change the face of filmmaking. Some of the younger generation, who in the past might have been trying to break into the UCLA film school, which boasts famous graduates like Francis Coppola and George Lucas, are instead buying video equipment and taking it to the city streets.

Film executives are fond of saying video presents absolutely no threat to The Industry, while they are struggling to make deals



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## A VIDEO-QUAKE RUMBLES BENEATH THE FILM ESTABLISHMENT

for their studios that will raise video-release revenues from major motion pictures.

The phenomenon of "after-money," in which the movie that drew nobody to the large screen makes a fortune in video, has launched video outlets as the fastest-growing retail business in America.

**Avoiding air-conditioned minds:** Camera-heads like Andy Whit realize that if they can break into that market directly, without having to pass through air-conditioned buildings and talk to movie executives, they will have pulled off the town's biggest coup since cowboys put on rouge and took over Hollywood Boulevard.

Imagine: unknown video-maker creates single-handed masterpiece for \$12.37 and sells it to retail video outlets, or lays it out on consignment. It's good; word spreads. In

six weeks the artist makes big bucks.

Is this an impossible pipe-dream? No more impossible than independent producers such as Stanley Kubrick cracking the closed studio system of the '50s and no more impossible than contract players such as Goldie Hawn turning around and producing their own films and becoming millionaires overnight.

Except in this case the video rebels have aesthetic and political ideas that deviate much further from the traditional Hollywood mold. These video-makers incorporate a more global view of political reality, environmental concerns and economic justice that the Industry establishment, as it now stands, can't easily assimilate.

In a city where some estimates place the Salvadoran refugee population at 300,000—

greater than current population figures for San Salvador—the big issue is Central America and Reagan's war.

There is, for example, the stunning, meticulous work of Louis Hock, whose videos track his four years of living with illegal Latin American aliens. Hock's work is taped at such close range that it breaks down any attempt at sentimental construction of the fate of these displaced people.

And Cal James, who moves in and out of the L.A. art scene, is completing a two-hour video piece on Nicaragua called *Friends of the Contras*. The first hour finds James reminiscing in a Honduras hotel room about the 1984 bombing of Eden Pastora's press conference at which cameraman Tony Avirgan was nearly killed. In the second hour James stalks the streets of L.A., probing the



near total ignorance of random citizens about our nation's policies toward Central America.

**Symphony of stupidity:** James reveals an information gap that no TV exposure of media turnaround can capture.

"Sheer stupidity is what I'm trying to show," he says. "We tend to forget that [stupidity] exists if we get too wound up ourselves in deciphering the media. We're swimming in information, so we tactitly project that everybody else is, too. But I want to put crass stupidity up on a platform and make a symphony out of it. As a gigantic wake-up device."

It looks like he'll get his chance. James is planning a tour of 37 California colleges and universities this spring. He has official invitations to 10, and he's a veteran when it comes to setting up impromptu screenings, using either a three-monitor format in a small room or the 9-by-12-foot screen for crowds of 200.

"Campuses are the places to go. Students there are apathetic as long as you don't tickle their funny bones, but I've found that as soon as you can make them laugh, they turn into different people. It's remarkable. Suddenly they see through stupid and transparent political motives. They drop the facade of being conservative young yuppies-in-training who only care about security and money."

Political messages are often exchanged in such informal ways. A video-maker may score a few thousand dollars from a Pacific Palisades liberal to do a piece on nukes or acid rain. A loose-knit distribution network then kicks in. Hundreds of cheap duplicates are made and sent to college groups, to anti-war organizations, to small video theaters and to distributors who favor art and political videos. Target Video is one such distributor, so is Independent Video. There is even an entrepreneur of sorts, a well-known political artist, Sheila Pinkel, who works with the principal political bookstore on the west side of town, Midnight Special, in providing a video service for activist groups. For instance, Pinkel will find environmentalists who are trying to clean up the filthy Santa Monica Bay and she'll connect them with sympathetic video artists.

One of East L.A.'s big concerns over the past three years has been the spraying of the insecticide malathion from helicopters to stop the spread of the Mediterranean fruit fly, which threatens the state's major citrus crops. As with most toxic substances, debate drones on for months, sometimes years, regarding the possible harmful effects on humans. Yet specialized video artists like John Arvanites or Richard Wyton are willing to spend years preparing work on a single subject like malathion, or agent orange, the dioxin-containing substance that is more potent than plutonium.

Wyton says, "Studying a subject like dioxin in depth brings you into the scientific and political establishments in a way that is emotionally profitable, because you've got the goods on liars, to be frank, before you even start. Even a cursory review of the scientific literature lets you know, right off the bat, that only an idiot or a moral moron would sanction dioxin's use in herbicides."

"So you've got that edge," he says, "before you set up your camera and chat with a corporate salesman, who is trying to pretend he's hyping nothing more dangerous than hair spray. That little bit of leverage allows

you to dismantle people's fronts. That's what I'm interested in. Penetrating the facile exterior. We're living in an age where everybody has gotten so hip to P.R. that hoodwinking the public is child's play."

As a result, one effect of the video explosion, in political terms, can be to turn the hype around and expose the spokespeople.

**The Nihilist Olympics:** One of the most ambitious and bizarre video artists, in this regard, is Elisha Shapiro, who gained major media coverage during the 1984 Olympics, when he presented his alternative, *Nihilist Olympics*. News of his Nihilist Olympics reached TV stations in France, England, Japan and Australia. It featured such events as the decathlon of housework, the U-turn competition (in which drivers made circular maneuvers on crowded downtown streets while a panel of judges rated their style) and an art-defacing contest in a rubble-filled lot near a busy freeway.

Now Shapiro is preparing a video for his upcoming presidential campaign in 1988. He plans to enter primaries, tour major U.S. cities and, instead of giving speeches, do performances that include video footage that lampoons the media circus surrounding political campaigns.

**The mock news:** John Arvanites' *Malathion* video incorporates another genre, even more familiar to the American public than gushy campaign puff-pieces. He employs the quick, restless cutting of nightly newscasts.

Using local news footage covering the seven days of malathion spraying in Echo Park, Arvanites accelerates the already fast TV editing tempo, and intensifies TV news' penchant for abrupt juxtapositions. By intercutting violent images of glass breaking and mothers rubbing babies' heads, Arvanites imparts an ominous tone to the squeaky-clean news coverage.

*Malathion* showed in L.A. and New York art galleries, as well as at community political meetings in Echo Park. It was enthusiastically received in Echo Park, where it encouraged local efforts to halt the spraying. The spraying was, in fact, stopped two-thirds of the way through its schedule.

Video-makers also challenge the establishment in less obvious ways. And there is an underground aspect to the video explosion that may pose a greater threat to Hollywood than these gonzo environmentalists. In Long Beach, for example, an hour south of Los Angeles, Jane Wilcox taped the daily lives of five suburban families, and secretly made a narrative track that constructed the private thoughts of happy scrubbed mothers and dads and kiddies, and even dogs and cats. She covered the mainstream of profanity and then some, and attributed all sorts of anti-social impulses to these model Americans.

Instead of trying to get an art gallery to show the piece, she raised a few bucks and had 40 copies run off. These she mailed to various video people around the country who were sure to make further copies of the work, titled *The Secret Thoughts and Interior Lives of Our Finest American Products*.

Little ripples? They interest independent film producers like Alvin Danes, who see a

possible theater market for "nasty social commentary."

**Biting the Hollywood hand:** "People are fed up," Danes says, "with light satire and, on the other end of the scale, Rambo-like nonsense. In five years all these hulks without shirts waving weapons around will look as stupid and passé as '50s beach musicals. People want something more biting."

Beyond the aesthetics, the film industry has created a financial opening through which these video artists may leap in the near future. Because of the home-market for videos of motion pictures, and because of the rise in ticket prices at the theaters, marketing people have figured out that any film made for under a million dollars, under certain conditions, will show a profit—not necessarily a huge profit, but a margin that is tempting to businessmen who want to move into the film business.

Henry Jaglom is the most notable example of an American filmmaker who has scuffled and scraped along for years, making low-budget movies, and has now emerged into the sunlight. His black comedies, *Can She Bake a Cherry Pie* and *Sitting Ducks* have done reasonably well in large cities. Both made for under a million, they've secured Jaglom's reputation for the foreseeable future. More than that, they've assured that he can raise that million to make another film, and can keep doing it forever. His investors are happy and, more importantly, he's happy.

"I never wanted to make epics," he says. "I want to focus on a few characters and, in a limited environment, look into their lives. The so-called lack of money is no limitation at all. There is this loophole in Hollywood. Make an interesting film for \$800,000, possibly use an actor who is recognized, but a good actor, and with a decent distribution deal you will come out ahead."

A filmmaker who loves video is Penelope Spheeris, whose *Suburbia*, a movie about punk kids who take over gutted houses on the outskirts of L.A., became a cult classic on video release, and contains probably the best rock'n'roll footage ever done for a non-concert feature.

"Some friends of mine are very active on the video scene," she says, "and there's every chance of breaking into film through video, as far as I'm concerned, if you're willing to forego making *The Bible*."

Spheeris' work (which also includes the punk rockumentary *Decline of Western Civilization*) has the immediacy usually found only on video, where the art direction isn't so slick that it creates distance between the audience and the actors. Her success has encouraged L.A. video artists to try to raise funds for their own features, using video footage as a tease for investors.

**The voice of Hollywood:** A Hollywood film executive who requested anonymity sees video as the unseen threat to the movie business. "People don't get the point yet in Hollywood. They think we're cementing our grip on entertainment by making great deals on video distribution of films. That's just the beginning of our trouble. These independent video artists running around are training people's eyes and minds in different ways.

Training them away from the traditional illusion that film creates. Videos are harsher, more real, less mixed with music to give you that velvet underpinning that makes the worst piece of film-dreck seem bearable.

"Rock videos actually stole some of the techniques from video artists," he continues. "They didn't take so much from film. Now the current crop of video artists are getting more political, more fed up with the crap that passes for Americana and the 'American mind.' That attitude is going to pass very quickly into the filmmaker's sensibility. You'll see: the new films about America's role in the world are going to be a lot tougher and they'll have less gush in their production values."

"My colleagues in the film business are, frankly, too dim in the head to see this happening," he says. "You just can't have a few thousand young, restless video freaks running around Los Angeles without it having a heavy impact on the film business. Take Oliver Stone, for example. His two war films, *Salvador* and *Platoon*. Just the fact that they were made shows the sensibilities of people are changing. Don't kid yourself. Everything in this media pool called Los Angeles crosses over and fertilizes—everything."

"Film people are interested, beyond money, in only one thing: control. They want to think they're controlling the industry of image-making. That's always been their delusion. It's even more a delusion these days. Video is already having a huge impact."

**Back to nowhere:** Andy Whit, the video artist unknown even to other video freaks, has walked across the street in the rain and set up under an awning with his camera. A tall blonde in black high heels clacks out of the shop and shoos him away. He moves next door under the same awning, to another boutique.

No one bothers him here. He scans the street, looking for drunks. I'm watching him through the window of a luncheonette, where I'm having a beer. I leave money on the counter, walk outside, cross the street and join him.

"Why don't you get drunk?" he says. "I'll shoot you."

Whit speculates that perhaps 1,000 videos were made in L.A. in the last eight months. That's a ton of tape. The sheer weight of that alone must eventually reach an audience. But for now, thousands like Whit languish in obscurity on the fringes of Hollywood.

Huddling in the rain, Whit says that he hates filmmakers, because they have the money and the equipment and the facilities. Maybe it sounds corny, but rippling beneath the surface of the world's film capital there is a kind of new video wave building. And it's a wave with a sharp edge of revenge.

You see it in the way they take TV footage and twist it and intercut it and rip it to shreds and reassemble it. More and more video-makers are fed up with the images Hollywood doles out, and they're doing something about it. And they're saying, Thank you, Sony, thank you, Magnavox, Thank you, Panasonic. ■

**Jon Rappoport** is a Los Angeles-based writer whose work has appeared in the *L.A. Weekly* and many other publications.



# EDITORIAL

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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Steve Kagan

## Hart failure says more about system than him

Gary Hart's talk of new ideas has led many people, especially political consultants, to talk about him as the creator of a new politics. "Rather than being the end of a kind of politics," one friend said after Hart's demise, "he presaged a kind of politics."

But putting aside Hart's talk of "new ideas"—none of which he had—it makes more sense to see Hart as the ultimate product of the TV age, as the culmination of a legacy bequeathed by John F. Kennedy in 1960. In that sense, his sudden departure says more about our current nominating system than it does about character. And it puts Hart at the end of a line, rather than at the beginning.

Since Kennedy's victory against Richard Nixon, the trend has been away from candidates who represent regions of the country or coalitions of constituencies—away from consistent adherence to principles or issues—and toward an almost frantic chase to align with the results of the latest opinion poll.

Hart epitomized this process in his campaign for the presidential nomination against Walter Mondale in 1984. Making a case for himself as an independent and free-thinking challenger who owed nothing to anyone, he attacked Mondale as a man shackled by commitments to special interests. In one primary after another, he painted Mondale as the candidate of grasping labor unions that hoped to place their man in the White House.

This year he continued to talk about new ideas, and to journalists he insisted that it was the issues, not his private behavior, that mattered. But in making a case for himself as his own interest group, he had made himself the issue. And in the end he couldn't have it both ways. Having made himself the issue, he became fair game.

Of course, elections in this country—especially presidential elections—have only rarely been fought over clearly defined issues. But before the TV age presidential candidates were generally more closely associated with issues and with coalitions of constituencies.

Even so, since World War II we have had an essentially one-party system, symbolized by an almost unbroken tradition of bi-partisanship in foreign policy.

The joint commitment of both Democratic and Republican parties to the framework of the Cold War—and to the military basis of our economy—has entailed a fundamental agreement between the parties, and among presidential candidates, on the most basic aspects of public policy and social priorities. Presidential elections have not been forums within which to debate the wisdom or desirability of organizing our society along these lines—except briefly and then only marginally in 1968, when Robert F. Kennedy and then Eugene McCarthy campaigned for an end to the Vietnam War.

In opposing Mondale in 1984, Hart talked about new ideas, but did not differ with him on matters of substance. That is what led him to contribute to the denigration of the idea that our elected leaders should represent identifiable constituencies. But Hart has gone about as far as one can go in representing a rootless politics. When he first ran for the Senate he had lived in Colorado only three years—and he has not been there much since. When he kicked off his abortive campaign this year, he did so in a newly purchased Rocky Mountain cabin, with a fire in the fireplace and an elk hide on the wall. This attempt to create an image of rootedness was only one more example of manipulating the public, albeit a benign one. But it symbolizes the emptiness of Hart's politics of new ideas and the superficiality of our politicians in general.

All of this says little or nothing about Hart's character. In following this path he was only doing what his predecessors and contemporaries have done. As a politician—and on the issues—Hart was no worse than many and better than most. Certainly, his character could stand the test against the White House's current occupant, whose best defenses against the current scandals of contragate have been negligence, ignorance, forgetfulness and self-deception.

But Hart's problem was not really character. It was in the social irresponsibility of our presidential system. He contributed to that irresponsibility in pursuit of what turned out to be an elusive goal. If we were lucky, the approach to politics that he represented would end with his withdrawal.



# LETTERS

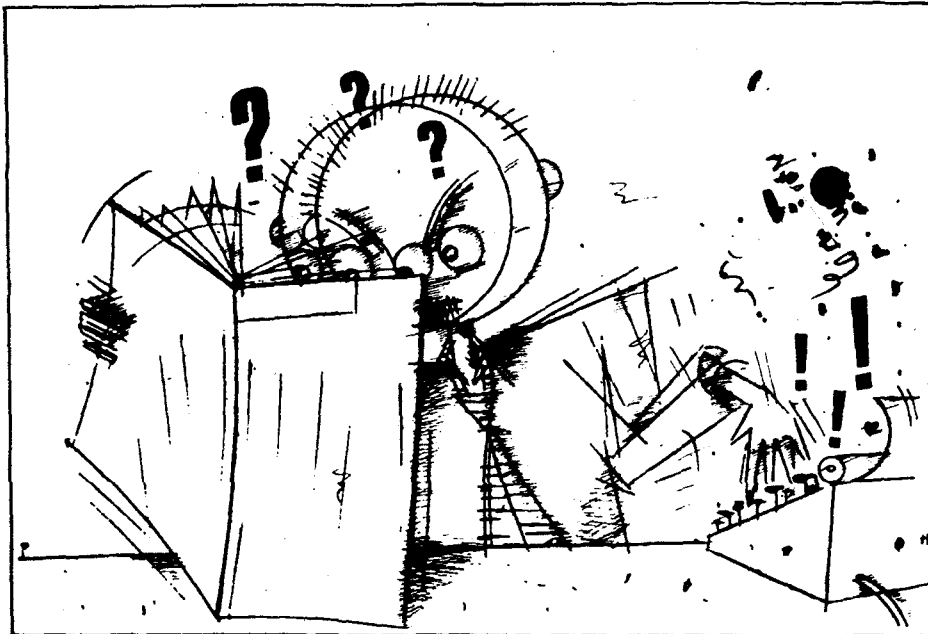
## Gay power

**B**RAVO FOR YOUR INSIGHTFUL REPORT ON "CON-  
tragate fund-raising for guns and lovers"  
(*JTT*, April 22). Some of us have suspected  
for years that the entire New Right was run  
by pairs of gay lovers. Finally, a paper with  
the guts to tell the truth!

Thanks also for exposing the gay domina-  
tion of the straight liberal press. At last we  
can understand why the papers constantly  
run pieces favorable to gays. I guess it was  
naïve not to see this earlier, given the bla-  
tant bias toward homosexuality of our soci-  
ety.

Perhaps next week you can uncover the  
real story behind the media buildup of the  
Palestinians as American folk heroes.

Robert A. Padgug  
New York



## CIA

**R**ICHARD ASINOF'S ABSOLUTELY GREAT COVER  
story on the Northampton trial of the  
demonstrators against the CIA recruitment  
campaign (*JTT*, April 29) calls for a slight,  
but important, supplement. The necessity  
defense that was successfully employed in  
the Northampton trial is permitted not only  
in Massachusetts but all over the United  
States. Trial judges who have denied the  
necessity defense have been overruled in  
case after case, in state after state, and by  
the Supreme Court of the United States,  
which ruled that "so long as the functions  
of judge and jury are distinct, the one re-  
sponding to the law, the other to facts,  
neither can invade the province of the other  
without destroying the significance of trial  
by court and jury." The University of Santa  
Clara *California Law Review* has published  
in its Spring 1986 issue an excellent study  
of the necessity defense by Virginia Stark  
and Robert Aldridge.

Fredrick S. Gram  
St. Paul, Minn.

## Alive and biting

**D**AN LAZARE POSITS IN A REVIEW OF *JEWS IN*  
*America Today* that anti-Semitism may  
raise its head again in America (*JTT*, March  
25). He claims that author Lenni Brenner  
believes anti-Semitism is so far removed  
from most of America as essentially to have  
perished.

I have unpleasant news from working-  
class America. As one who has been a mem-  
ber of three labor unions within the past  
20 years and who has lived and worked  
both in cities and rural America, it is my  
regrettable chore to report that the hatred  
of Jews is very much alive.

The thin and cheap veneer of siblinghood  
applied to the U.S. image was never mean-  
ingful in either an official or heartfelt citizen  
sense. While the government beat its breast  
in the early '40s (finally) over Hitler's hor-  
rors the same government allowed God  
knows how many Jews to die for lack of  
sanctuary.

Penny Lernoux (*In Banks We Trust*) docu-  
ments the vigor with which the U.S. collab-  
orated with and protected Nazis following  
WWII. From Italy to Bolivia to the very in-  
nermost circles of U.S. scientific and intelli-  
gence communities, the U.S. cut deals with  
unrepentant war criminals.

My personal witness to the anti-Semitic  
(and anti-black, Indian, Japanese, etc.) infra-

structure of citizens' belief systems has  
been revealed steadily and surely over the  
years by the many plain folks I've worked  
with. Not all, of course, but a substantial  
portion of average people simply have no  
affinity for official policy of regarding Jews  
as desirable human beings.

On-the-job politeness is not a stressed  
asset. Neither is it in a workingman's bar.  
An economic disaster, plus an accomplish-  
ed demagogue could evoke the vast re-  
serves of existing ill-will.

Tom Hastings  
Ashland, Wis.

## Not lately

**O**N THE EXCHANGE BETWEEN BRENNER AND LA-  
zare over *Jews in America* (*JTT*, March  
25): There is definitely no single view of  
Jewishness either in America, or in Israel.  
On the contrary, there is a multitude of  
vocal writers in both countries. But we must  
judge these viewpoints from a historical as-  
pect. Ideologues are not proper leaders.  
Jews here in Austin, whether Secular, Re-  
form, Conservative or Orthodox, live to-  
gether in harmony, whereas in NYC, DC and  
Boston they are far from harmonious. In  
Israel, sadly, the Theocrats are beating up  
on the Socialists. Is there going to be an  
end to this? Has there ever been a Jewish  
time of peace since the time of Solomon?

Walden C. Pierson  
Austin, Texas

## Close watch

**I**N AN ARTICLE ON U.S. POLICY TOWARD SOUTH  
Africa (*JTT*, March 11), journalist Pippa  
Green seems to add a new twist to "McCar-  
thyism": guilt by observation. She writes:

"U.S. officials and the AFL-CIO's American

Africa Labor Center [sic] (AALC) watched  
closely when Chief Buthelezi launched his  
pro-investment, pro-free enterprise union,  
United Workers Union of South Africa  
(UWUSA), as a rival to the 600,000-strong  
Congress of South African Trade Unions."

Come on now. Were U.S. officials and the  
AALC seen together in a darkened bar  
"watching closely" and were they just stroll-  
ing together in the park? I'll bet a lot of  
other people, including Tambo and Con-  
gress of South African Trade Union officials,  
"watched closely" when UWUSA was  
launched.

David N. Dorn  
Director, International Affairs  
American Federation of Teachers

**Pippa Green replies:** It is well known that  
both the Reagan administration and the  
AFL-CIO have long had an interest in Chief  
Buthelezi. Amid much controversy, Buthe-  
lezi was co-awarded the George Meany  
Human Rights Award by the AFL-CIO in  
1982. Moreover, three weeks before the  
launch of UWUSA, the head of the AFL-CIO's  
South African program was seen having din-  
ner with top UWUSA officials in a Washing-  
ton, D.C., restaurant. After the launch, an  
AALC consultant advised the body on how  
to relate to UWUSA. "Watched closely"  
merely expresses the obvious interest in a  
union that had Buthelezi's backing. The  
word "guilt" is Dorn's, not mine.

## Heroes, then and now

**M**OST OF US CAN REMEMBER THE MY LAI MAS-  
acre, when George Wallace, our lead-  
ing political reactionary, defended Lt. Wil-  
liam Calley as an American hero.

Today, we have another "American hero,"  
Oliver North, with all his Vietnam deco-  
rations, being defended by the inhabitant

of the Oval Office and by members of Con-  
gress—a sad comment on the degeneracy  
of our political system in the intervening  
years. Whether in the case of North, Secord  
or Hasenfus, the madness of the Vietnam  
war stalks the corridors of the Iran-contra  
scandal.

The chief actors in Contragate are going  
before the cameras in civilian garb, but in  
their closets hang uniforms decorated with  
many Vietnam service ribbons. In Ronald  
Reagan's closet there hangs his statement  
as California governor, speaking of anti-war  
demonstrators, "If it takes a bloodbath, let's  
get it over with."

The Reagan era has not been a bloody  
period like that of the '60s, but in the present  
drama we are surely witnessing another  
struggle of the American political mind to  
achieve democratic accord with Third  
World peoples.

Kemp Houck  
Kansas City

## Howard Beach

**J**IM SLEEPER HAS DROPPED THE OTHER SHOE IN  
his Howard Beach blame-the-victim cru-  
sade (*Letters*, April 8). He has gone from  
criticizing the black-led movement against  
racism to shamelessly siding with the rac-  
ists by declaring police suspicion of the vic-  
tims was justified and that the victims lied  
about what they "were doing in the area."

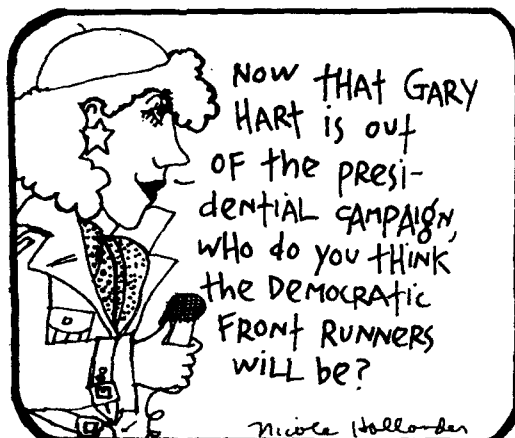
Really, I guess Sleeper believes the vic-  
tims drove their car on the Belt Parkway,  
made it break down outside Howard Beach  
and, after requesting and receiving no as-  
sistance and then heading for the subway  
home, prowled the white neighborhood of  
Mafioso John Gotti and others, at night. As  
for Dominic Blum, who is at best a hit-and-  
run driver, Sleeper has only sympathy. So  
it's "If you're black, get back, if you're white,  
you're all right."

Refuting the rest of Sleeper's assertions  
would take not the length of a letter but a  
book. Some examples now: Sleeper says the  
special prosecutor said Sandiford lied. This  
is flatly untrue. His office was quoted as  
saying that if (a big if) Sandiford's version  
was wrong, it had something to do with his  
being beaten near senseless. In fact, it was  
Queens D.A. Santucci's sham prosecution,  
without Sandiford's version used, that let  
the white youths off. Santucci claimed he  
had no case without Sandiford. Did Sleeper  
miss this?

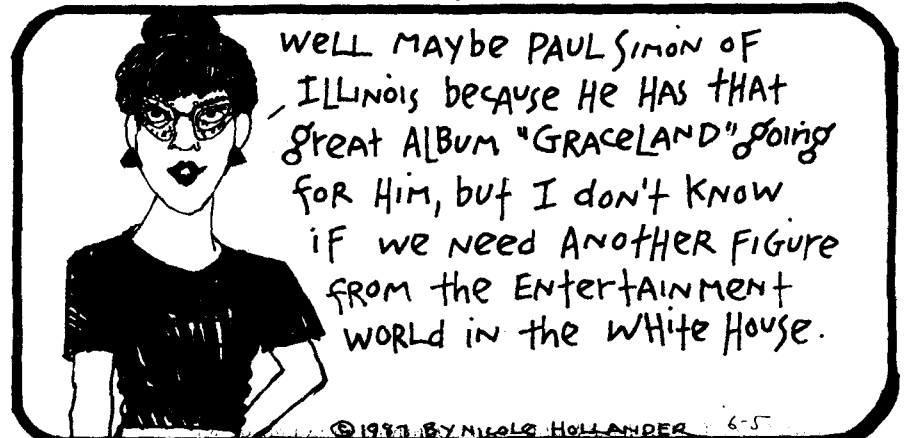
In conclusion, if the predominantly-white  
left like Sleeper continues to attack the  
black liberation movement, which it has so  
often historically done, it will condemn it-  
self to irrelevance at best or to being an  
enemy of the oppressed at worst.

Eddie Goldman  
New York

## SYLVIA



## by Nicole Hollander





By Dave West

**I**T IS A BLIZZARD AT DAWN ON A MONDAY morning in January in New Brunswick, N.J. Two dozen shivering students stand in front of a garage to encourage Rutgers University bus drivers to support striking cafeteria, clerical and custodial workers by refusing to drive. Several campus security cruisers arrive with a video camera and a promise of arrest. The students retreat to a diner for warmth, breakfast and strategy. I am amazed by their high spirits. They tell me that students have been coming out of the woodwork to organize in support of the union. Three days later I join most of these new friends to dance half the night to celebrate the union's victory.

Contrary to popular belief, progressive student activity is once again on the rise. As a recently politicized student and current full-time student organizer, I have participated in a rekindling of activity that is spreading to colleges throughout the nation, and is even reaching high schools.

**Today's students:** The mainstream media have produced a false image of today's young people as conservative. Similar to young people in the '60s who developed their own counterculture, the vast majority of my generation are politically alienated. The political trends that *Newsweek* trumpets run about as deep as the button-down shirts and short hair many of us wear. By this standard, the masses partying at Woodstock were the pinnacle of radicalism and the people who fought for free speech at Berkeley and sat in the Woolworth's in Greensboro were mainstream.

## Left politics is reviving on university campuses



papers (see *In These Times*, Jan. 14).

Many students have become angry about current economic pressures. The most substantive factors in student life today are the skyrocketing costs of tuition, room and board and the shrunken job market. Financial aid for students is harder to come by. Economics limit one's choice of schools. More students work part- and full-time jobs. Students see themselves graduating into a bleak job market and wading in debt. Meanwhile, Education Secretary William Bennett blames students for spending loan money on luxuries and Reagan tells whiners to shut up and open the classified pages.

I felt the tide turning in October 1984 while helping to organize a demonstration after transferring to the University of Colorado at Boulder. National progressive student groups alerted campus organizers that the College Republicans were coordinating pre-election celebrations of "Granada Liberation Day" at key campuses around the country. They illustrated a mailing with photocopies of intercepted College Republicans' organizing materials. A broad coalition of groups at Colorado turned out more than 1,000 students and dwarfed the College Republicans.

As a senior in the spring of 1985, I was thoroughly excited by reports of imaginative organizing on other campuses. Columbia students were blockading their library over investments in South Africa. News of Yale's citizens' arrest of the CIA inspired me to pledge to join 10 other students in my first act of civil disobedience when the CIA came to Boulder. A week after my decision 478 people were arrested.

Now, as a full-time organizer spreading news of successful organizing to others at campuses around the country, the issue that I see brewing is control of the university. Students are demanding to participate in decisions that affect them. At Johns Hopkins organizers started with the goal of influencing the board of trustees to divest. Last spring a shanty built by the Coalition for a Free South Africa was firebombed by conservative students. The administration responded by banning shanties. This fall the Coalition rebuilt the shanty, 14 of its members went to jail and local television brought the issue of free speech at Johns Hopkins into Baltimore living rooms. That same week, the students won their right to build shanties.

It's not just Johns Hopkins and it's not just divestment. The CIA decided to return to Boulder and were greeted by another protest. When the University of Colorado threatened to suspend seven demonstrators, thousands of students protested. Again, the administration was forced to back down. Similar organizing this winter saved students active at Brown University and Oberlin College.

The future of student activity appears bright. Students are building coalitions on individual campuses to link various social issues. Organizers are reaching beyond their campuses to unite with other students and to play leadership roles in community groups. It's time for more of us to take students seriously.

**Dave West** is an organizer at the National Student Action Center, the support center and clearinghouse for progressive student organizers. Write: NSAC, Box 15599, Washington, DC 20003.

We should be looking at the leadership and political attitudes among students. Students continue to organize successfully for what they believe and polls continually prove that they are to the left of the general population on issues of civil liberties and international relations.

How can I tell that more students are becoming politically active on the left? When I entered Brandeis University in 1981, the campus was a flashpoint of social rest. I had no interest in politics, so I fit in. Reading the *Boston Globe* depressed me. In a lone moment of organized protest I marched with dozens of classmates to demand tenure for a liberal professor during my second year.

Now in 1986-87 students demanding divestment at Brandeis have committed numerous acts of civil disobedience. Last November more than 1,000 Brandeis students participated in a rally for the same cause. There are also groups that organize around a spectrum of other issues including

women's rights, nuclear disarmament, minority rights and justice in Central America.

Brandeis does have a rich tradition of social criticism and action, but one can find a pattern of rising activity on hundreds of other campuses. New groups are sprouting up. The student organizers I work with report that membership in their groups is growing. Increasingly underclass students, rather than seniors or graduate students, are in leadership positions. Seasoned organizers are pleased to see first-year students come to school looking to get involved.

**High schools, too:** The trend that I find most exciting is high school students getting active. This winter more than 300 Connecticut high school students came to a disarmament conference at Yale University. Students at three high schools in California fasted with people at 39 colleges across the country in the Student Fast for Peace in Nicaragua. San Francisco Bay Area high school students have formed a network called Basic Peace.

Several factors have caused the trend toward more activity. Primarily, the national political pendulum is swinging back to the left. Citizens in general are tired of ineffective, offensive arch conservatism. While interest in the Democratic and Republican parties is shrinking, membership in progressive grassroots organizations is growing. It is true that being on the defensive under Reagan has galvanized the left, and organizations are capitalizing on public attitudes by aggressively canvassing and using direct mail and phone-banking.

In addition, the time that most people associate with resistance to authority—the '60s—is no longer viewed with universal distaste. Corporations are marketing products for nostalgic baby-boomers with the music and images from the '60s. Radio waves are crowded with "classic rock" stations. Abbie Hoffman is back in the news-

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By Deena Hurwitz

**W**HEN IT COMES TO THE PALESTINE LIBeration Organization (PLO), few attempt to differentiate mainstream supporters of Yassir Arafat, hard-line extremists in the Hawatmeh and Habash camps and followers of the marginalized but notorious Abul Abbas. Accordingly, headlines in the American press covering last month's Palestine National Council (PNC) meeting proclaimed "Unity bodes ill for peace process," and "Arafat retreats, harms chances for Middle East peace."

Some claim that Arafat sold his moderation for unity. Yet, ironically, even when he was out on a limb—free, according to this argument, to put his moderate approach to the test through the Amman Accord—neither Israel nor the U.S. would come to the table. And now that the hardcore Palestinian left has been brought back into the PLO framework, such people insist—as did Israeli Foreign Ministry Political Officer Yossi Beilin—that "Arafat's decision to prefer PLO unity to moderation...proves that the PLO cannot be a partner for negotiations."

But it can't be both ways, unless, of course, one has a stake in preventing negotiations. And for an organization as unfailingly committed to the hard line as the PLO is perceived to be, there was an amazingly strong emphasis at this 18th session in Algiers, on an international peace conference involving all parties to the conflict, including Israel. Come to think of it, another peace process configuration was also central to the 17th session in 1984: the Amman Accord.

**PLO's priorities:** One of the truths about the PLO, for better or for worse, is that they don't play to a Western audience. Arafat, for all the media attention he commands, does not put much stock in Western P.R. or image mastery. In fact, the greatest tensions within PLO strategy appear to be between those who work in the Arab world and Palestinians who work in the West. The PLO's expressed priorities are (1) the Palestinian people in the camps in Lebanon and in the occupied territories; (2) the Palestinian view of the peace process; and (3) relations with other Arab nations.

To understand developments within the PLO, one must approach them from the Palestinian vantage point, not the North American or Israeli. From this perspective the headlines starkly contrast with the mood at the Palais des Nations in Algiers. There was no spirit of self-congratulation, as if unity were an end in itself, but an air of achievement, of a victory for moderation. Unity was seen as a means toward a bigger goal: an international peace conference.

Asked whether the PLO position that an international peace conference must be based on all U.N. resolutions, including Resolution 242, Naif Hawatmeh said that, indeed, 242 is included. The important difference, he said, is that Israel and the U.S. want a peace conference based solely on 242. The PLO doesn't accept 242 on its own because it treats Palestinians as refugees, not as a people struggling for self-determination.

Ultimately, the PNC resolutions reaffirmed a point made by Foreign Minister Farouk Kadouni in his political report. The PLO must study and work with "democratic and progressive forces inside Israel" who oppose the occupation and expansion of Israel, and recognize the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.



PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat emerged from the Palestinian National Council meeting last month with his moderate policies intact.

## Palestinian Council unity lays basis for peace

As a representative of an American Jewish organization committed to mutual recognition and the right to national self-determination of both Israel and the Palestinians, I agreed. Several people explained that this affirms a recognition of Israeli society. A personal adviser to Chairman Arafat said, "More and more, Palestinians are coming to understand Israel as a society, with millions of people who do not all think like Yitzhak Shamir. We know that there are Israelis suffering inside Israel for having tried to help us."

Israeli Minister Without Portfolio Ezer Weizmann was quoted in the *New York Times* as saying, "Given that the PLO was strengthened in Algiers, I believe that, despite all that we say, we will find ourselves sitting with Palestinians whose roots are with the PLO." There is within the Israeli government at this time a heated debate between Prime Minister Shamir and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres over the desirability of some kind of international conference.

**Terms of unity:** Clearly, Western skepticism about the PNC centers on the question, what price unity? Numerous voices reiterated that, rather than Arafat's acquiescing to the extremists, the rejectionists accepted his program. Constant references to the 16th and 17th PNC sessions asserted those resolutions as grounds upon which the 18th session was based. In a private conversa-

tion I was told that the differences between the Democratic Front and Fatah are now minor, given the abrogation of the Amman Accord. Many delegates felt that this was a dead issue to begin with, since King Hussein announced his own abrogation in February 1986.

**Lessons of Lebanon:** If Lebanon originally lead to the split in the PLO, it was also a direct force in bringing the organization back together. Cognizant of the dead ends of factionalism, in terms of wresting power from Arafat, and also of the terrible toll on the Palestinians in the camps in Lebanon, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and others were subject to pressure to re-unite. The assumption is that as a tighter organization they will have greater leverage in protecting their people, whether militarily or politically.

Such political leverage implies a stronger Soviet role in the area. After three years of cool relations, the tenacity of the PLO in Lebanon and of Arafat's own leadership helped to influence the USSR to play a more active part in encouraging George Habash and Naif Hawatmeh to subsume their particular interests in the larger undertaking. And Syria seems to be accepting the new reality. Unity has "broken the back of the Palestine Salvation Front." Even extremists

who boycotted the PNC, such as Abu Musa, have purportedly been kicked out of Syria.

Rather than severing ties with Egypt, as hardliners wanted, the PNC resolution leaves future contact with that country up to the PLO Executive Committee. PLO relations with Egypt may depend on Egypt's distancing itself from Camp David. This does not require an abrogation of Camp David, but some statement from Egypt recognizing that the PLO must be included in the peace process—which is not mentioned in the Accords. Egypt's Foreign Minister Esmat Abdel Meguid left the door open to relations with the PLO by saying, "Our decision won't end Egypt's support for Palestinians. Egypt will continue to support the struggle of the Palestinians."

**The cost of disunity:** The PLO has been acutely aware that internal dissension undercuts its political activity. Unity makes it possible for the peace process to proceed, through an Arab summit meeting, and ultimately through an international peace conference. There is some expectation that the Soviets will play a facilitative role on both these counts. The USSR is interested in pulling the international peace conference along, and there is speculation that they will initiate efforts in the next few months, given the momentum of the PNC and in anticipation of upcoming elections in the U.S. and in Israel. Appreciation for Gorbachov's *glasnost* could be heard informally, while gratitude for the role of the USSR in making the unity meeting possible was expressed officially.

While the PLO appears to be suffering from a certain cooling of relations with the three major Arab nations, Egypt, Syria and Jordan, it is not likely that they will become major obstacles to an Arab summit. Like Egypt, Jordan has left the door open, even saying they recognize the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Syria, with a well-chronicled hatred for Arafat, is being pressured by the USSR to cooperate, at least by being patient.

It's always more difficult to be constructive than critical. And given the PLO trend, in the words of *Palestine Perspectives* editor Muhammed Hallaj, "toward placating their adversaries at the expense of their supporters," advocates of peace between Israel and the PLO often feel they take two steps backward for every one step forward. Nevertheless, if one is predisposed to reconciliation one can maneuver through the rhetoric and find important initiatives taking place. The question is, are we predisposed to an equitable resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or are we committed to the status quo?

In the past, Western governments asserted the view that even if they were to work with the PLO, it really represented only one faction: Fatah. This reason was used not to deal with the PLO. But even from the PLO's point of view, this was not an illegitimate stance. Now, however, the PLO is much more representative of Palestinians. Thus the West must either change its position on negotiating with the PLO or face the obvious conclusion that they simply are not interested in negotiating peace with the Palestinians.

**Deena Hurwitz** is co-chair of New Jewish Agenda's National Middle East Task Force. She represented New Jewish Agenda at the PNC as an observer.



## Pushing the Third World into the red

**The Global Struggle for More: Third World Conflicts with Rich Nations**

By Bernard D. Nossiter  
Harper and Row, 224 pp., \$20.00

By James North

EVERYONE KNOWS THAT THE PEOPLE of the Third World are far poorer than Americans, Europeans and Japanese. Still, it is a sharp shock when this inequality is shown visually, as in the superb *State of the World Atlas* by Michael Kidron and Ronald Segal.

One map displays the nations in proportion to their populations. South America and the U.S. are roughly equivalent. So are Africa and Europe. India and China are enormous blocks of colors, each as big as any one of the other continents.

A few pages later, the nations are

depicted proportionate to their national incomes. All of South America has shrunk to the size of the southwestern United States; tiny little Africa would easily fit into France; Nigeria, the most populated African nation, is half the size of Belgium. Japan is larger than China and could swallow half a dozen Indias.

**From pictures to words:** Bernard Nossiter, a veteran journalist with the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*, has written a compre-

### DEBT

hensive survey of the relations between the rich nations of the North and the poor nations of the South. In recent years, much of the attention to First-Third World relations has been concentrated on the \$1 trillion debt that the poorer countries are finding impossible to repay. A great strength of *The Global Struggle for More* is that Nossiter

does not view the debt in isolation, but as part of the larger crisis of world inequality.

Many people who are aware of that inequality still mistakenly believe that the West is giving away vast sums of foreign aid to try to redress the balance. Nossiter thoroughly debunks that wishful thought. In 1983, all aid, including that provided by the OPEC oil producers and the Soviet bloc, totalled only \$36 billion. That is a small figure set alongside the trillion-dollar debt. Of U.S. "aid," some 40 percent is military, and one-third of the total of \$8 billion went to Israel and Egypt in the continuing effort to buy peace in the Middle East.

Nossiter explains how U.S. aid originated in the late 1940s as a Cold War weapon. It has consistently been doled out primarily to purchase the loyalty of client governments in countries that are considered strategic, rather than

granted in a more rational way, based on need. In fact, Nossiter explains, the U.S. aid policy often leads to an immoral paradox. "As a general proposition," he says, "increased food production in Asian nations will strengthen a client government and is desirable, but if the measures to increase that output threaten the government's existence [here he means reforms like taking land from lazy oligarchs and distributing it more fairly to energetic small farmers], they are undesirable."

Not only is this help for corrupt dictatorships immoral, but, taken on its own terms, it is also unsuccessful. A huge U.S. aid program could not keep the Shah of Iran on his throne. Nossiter concludes that national aid programs should simply end, with assistance being channeled only through multi-lateral institutions like the agencies of the U.N. It is a provocative but persuasive view.

Third World nations have long argued that despite the trickle of aid southward the overall flow of wealth goes the other way, from South to North. In technical language, the "terms of trade" deteriorate. This means that while prices for Southern commodities (Peruvian copper, Ghanaian cocoa) stagnate or drop over time, prices for Northern imports (Caterpillar roadbuilders) increase. The Third World may even increase its production and still grow poorer. In the '70s, producers of other commodities hoped they could imitate the OPEC oil nations by banding together and raising prices. Not even OPEC can do that anymore.

Nossiter is skeptical of the deteriorating terms of trade argument, maintaining that over the past few decades it is still unproven. (Although, oil aside, no one is claiming that Southern products are dramatically rising relative to Northern manufactures.) What is beyond doubt is that during the '80s, which opened with a recession in the North that helped cause a devastating depression in the South, the theory has been convincingly validated. Between 1980 and 1982, world commodity prices dropped one-quarter; *The Economist* estimated the savings to the North in 1985 alone at \$65 billion.

In theory, Third World nations should diversify to avoid this dangerous dependence on primary commodities and start exporting manufactured goods themselves. A few—very few—countries, such as South Korea and Taiwan and, to a lesser extent, Brazil and Mexico, have been trying to do precisely that.

Their success has been limited. One of Nossiter's best chapters explains in interesting detail how pressures in the West have raised the barriers to imports from the Third World. The obstacles are no longer primarily tariffs, but various "voluntary" quotas, many of which are apparently secret. The overall increase in protectionism in the U.S. has been the greatest since the infamous Smoot-Hawley Act of 1930, which contributed to the Depression.

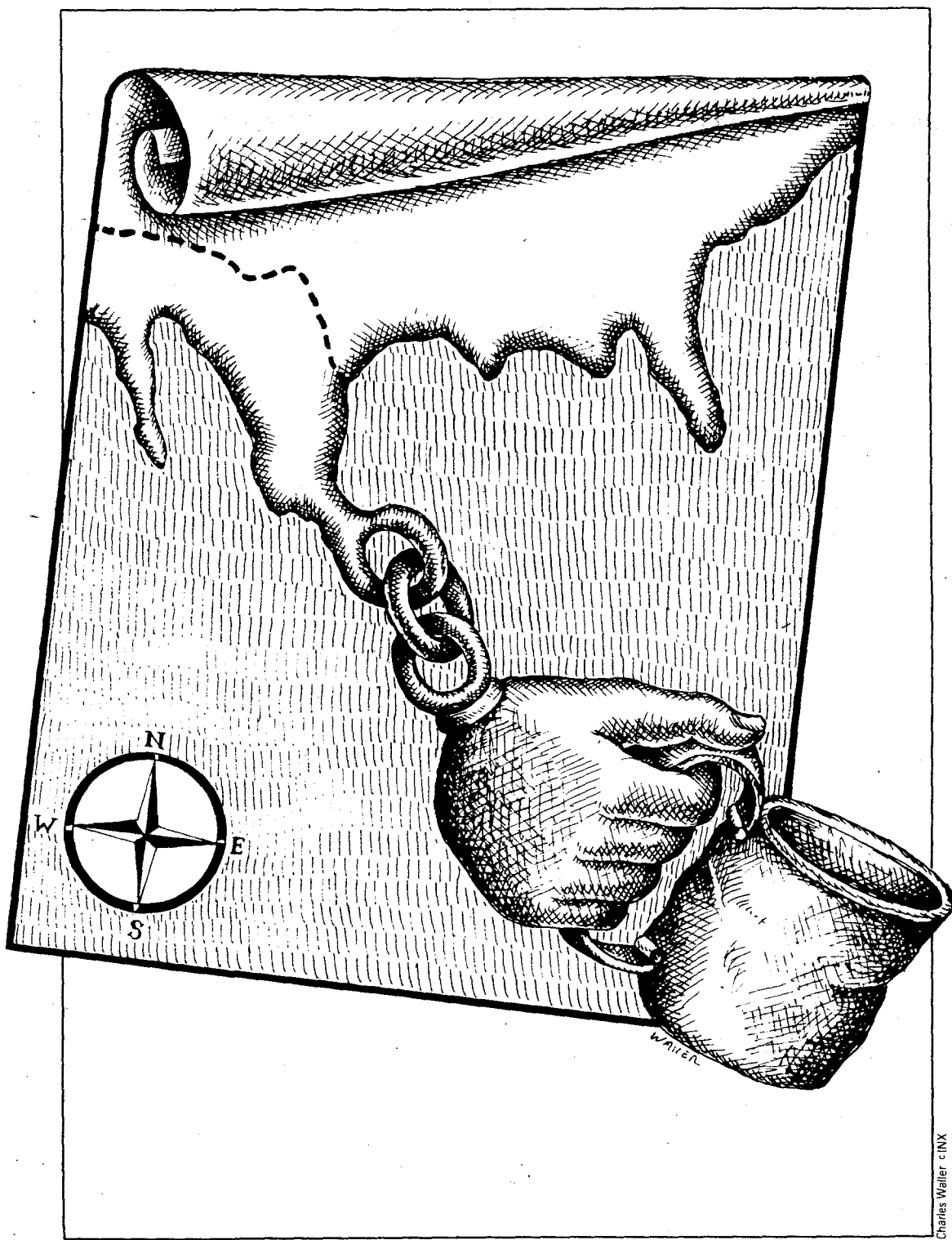
The Third World countries are cornered. If they continue to grow coffee or mine copper they face stagnant or declining world prices. Some of them realized this, and borrowed \$1 trillion, partly to build textile and steel plants. (In truth, part of the money was wasted on arms purchases or disappeared into the pockets of rich Southerners.) Now these countries find it difficult to export enough clothing and I-beams to earn the dollars they need to repay their debts.

Back in the '70s, it seemed there might be a way to ease the dilemma. Some of the resources of the ocean bed might be set aside to help the poorer nations. The South could benefit without taking from the North. Nossiter provides an entertaining account of the eight-year negotiations to write a Law of the Sea treaty. In an unusual meeting of minds, the U.S. and USSR became allies in an effort to keep the world's straits open to their navies. Nossiter writes, "A striking feature of the sea law negotiations

**Third World nations have long argued that despite the trickle of aid southward the overall flow of wealth goes the other way, from South to North. The Third World may increase its productivity and still grow poorer.**

was the sight of American and Soviet admirals, usually in ill-fitting business suits, huddling together in corridors and private conference rooms whenever a sensitive point arose."

In the end, those opposed to sharing the ocean bottom's potential mineral wealth, including the multinational corporations, weakened the draft treaty. Reaganites balked at even the watered-down version, and the U.S. has refused to sign it.





Nossiter's solution to world inequality is renewed growth in the North. He argues that an "incomes policy"—an informal pact among government, business and labor to guide wages and prices—could increase growth while lowering unemployment and limiting inflation. Growth in the North would weaken the demand for protection against Third World manufactures. Growth would (he argues, probably too optimistically) strengthen primary commodity prices so Southern exports would earn more. Inflation-free growth would lower interest rates, giving the debtor nations some relief.

But Northern growth by itself (as Nossiter recognizes) will not be sufficient to narrow the chasm between the First and Third Worlds. The trillion-dollar debt already exists; if the increased Southern income just goes right back to pay interest to New York or London banks it is hard to see what has been gained. And even if the debt repayments were somehow to be sharply reduced—a prospect unlikely without either a financial crisis in the North or militant joint action by the South—the Third World would probably at best return to the status quo of, say, 15 years ago. That was a South with growth in some countries (Brazil, for instance) which did not reach or change the lives of most Brazilians. Statistics from that time lied. When Ferdinand Marcos' income went up, the official figures also showed a rise in the per capita income of every poor Filipino sugarcane cutter.

Nossiter also underestimates how much the hostility of the West, particularly of the U.S., hinders genuine, balanced development in the Third World. Growth that benefits everyone in the South will require transformations in old ways of thinking, of working, of controlling property. But the U.S. is not only hostile to avowedly revolutionary governments in places like Vietnam, Angola and Nicaragua, but also to much milder experiments—like the democratically elected governments of Salvador Allende in Chile and Michael Manley in Jamaica. That kind of American pressure, which does not hesitate to include military intervention, must end if the Third World is to have a chance.

Probably the greatest strength of Nossiter's book is his persuasive insistence that improvement in the South need not be at the expense of people in the North. He convincingly explains that it is possible to work toward a new international order that could serve the needs of both working people in America and sugarcane cutters in the Philippines. It is only the big arms dealers, the multinational companies and the leading banks that are threatened by that cooperation.

James North, the author of *Freedom Rising*, is working on a book about the Third World debt crisis.



When steel mills close the shock waves often seem more devastating than in other major shutdowns.

## Banded together by steel community ties that bind

### Rusted Dreams: Hard Times in a Steel Community

By David Bensman and Roberta Lynch  
McGraw-Hill, 250 pp., \$17.95

By David Moberg

**M**OST STEEL MILL TOWNS, even the mill sections of a large metropolis like Chicago, generate a thick web of personal and social bonds. Usually, thousands of families depend on a single employer. The rhythms of changing shifts can link steelworkers to each other while isolating them from the rest of the community. And union solidarity, however weakened it may be, still knits together the blue-collar steel community. So when steel mills close, as they have done so frequently in recent years, the shock waves often seem more devastating than in other major shutdowns.

David Bensman, a labor studies professor at Rutgers, and Roberta Lynch, a writer and organizer who is now on the staff of a public employee union, capture the feeling of the steel community both when it was intact and later when it was shattered. But in their narrative—centered on the closing of Wisconsin Steel and the virtual shutdown of U.S. Steel's South Works in south Chicago—they also diagnose the ills of the industry and offer some prescriptions. *Rusted Dreams: Hard Times in a Steel Community* is a brisk, compelling introduction to a major social and economic problem; it's both analytical and full of the personal pain and frustration suggested by the book's title.

The authors describe how Wisconsin Steel was mismanaged—pushed into a precarious state by its owner, International Harvester, which then sought to get rid of it to avoid accumulated pension and other contractual obligations to workers. With a questionably arranged array of public financing, the mill was bought by a tiny firm, Envirodyne, which had no steel experience. Then, just as the title was transferred, Harvester provoked a long, bitter strike at factories that accounted for 40 percent of Wisconsin Steel's revenues. At this point, Harvester and Chase Manhattan suddenly foreclosed on the mill to take their collateral, leaving workers to suffer benefit losses due to a bad deal struck by their independent union.

**Stealing:** In 1982 U.S. Steel demanded local concessions from workers, on top of industry-wide wage concessions, as the price for building a new rail mill that promised to preserve South Works' dwindling labor force. The company eventually won the new work rules and got state aid to meet pollution requirements. But a year later U.S. Steel demanded more from workers, the city and the state. Many doubted that U.S. Steel intended to live up to its end of the continuing blackmail. The workers said no, the rail mill was cancelled and the mill dwindled to a few operations.

There were protests against concessions at South Works and fights to restore lost benefits at Wisconsin Steel, but the community and unions never launched the kind of struggle to save their jobs and the mills that took place in Youngs-

town, Ohio, or the Pittsburgh area. Bensman and Lynch point to a divided union legacy: the bitter fights for unionization left some militant traditions, but it also taught others to be cooperative and subservient. That latter strain was reinforced by

### RUST BELT

the dominance of conservative union leadership for decades after World War II, when the Steelworkers union was intimately meshed with the Democratic Party machine.

**The industry and the machine:** Machine-style politics of individual solicitation of favors rather than collective organization for common goals dominated the community and, to some extent, the union as well. The contrast is

***Rusted Dreams* is a brisk, compelling introduction to a major social and economic problem. This study is both analytical and full of personal pain and frustration.**

epitomized by steelworker insurgent Ed Sadlowski and the area's former alderman and the head of the city's Democratic Party, Ed Vrdolyak (whose law firm shared responsibility for Wisconsin steelworkers' bad deal). Yet despite the importance of the machine's politi-

cal influence, the failure of workers—or the community—to do more remains partially unexplained. Was there nothing they realistically could do?

Bensman and Lynch point to slowed growth in steel demand, mismanagement (including failure to concentrate modernization in a few mills) and new competition (both foreign and domestic) as the main underlying problems for the industry. In the late '70s and early '80s it faced high interest rates and a strong dollar. Although various government subsidies and trade protection schemes have been adopted over the years to help the industry, the authors argue that these measures failed because they were piecemeal and never based on the conviction that preserving the steel industry—and manufacturing—was a national priority.

The solution offered by Bensman and Lynch is to expand demand (such as spending less on the military and more on steel-related infrastructure), restrict imports (including steel-using indirect imports such as automobiles), ease credit and support research. They would impose an "import tax" equal to the differential between U.S. wages and overseas competitors' pay (although many European countries already have higher wages but sell competitively here). Basically, they want to raise steel prices and profits so that private investors will find steel attractive. But they also argue for public participation in corporate decisions and for contracts between private business, government and unions to modernize, invest, relax work rules and temper wage demands.

This program is an improvement on current policy and the laissez-faire, what might be described as the "let-the-Koreans-sell-us-steel" approach. But there are some nagging questions left. Why, if we are going to have public assistance and a voice, shouldn't we simply have public ownership? If oligopoly and protection from competition have doomed steel in the past, what will prod a new oligopoly, protected from foreign competition, to innovate and be efficient? How will they replace the arrogant, incompetent managers plaguing much of the industry? What happens to their plans for increased export of industrial goods when the price of steel goes up dramatically for U.S. manufacturers? Is there an investment strategy that makes sense without higher prices? Should the emphasis be on a crash development of new steelmaking technologies—many already well advanced in research—that could cut costs drastically?

*Rusted Dreams* can be read as a many-sided study of the steel industry, but it is also equally valuable as an exploration of blue-collar life and politics in the '80s. On both counts it offers a realistically small glimmer of hope despite the grim immediacy.





Grammy-winning producers Terry Lewis and Jimmy "Jam" Harris top the pop charts.

## Producers Lewis and Jam: radio monsters popping up in Minneapolis

By Michael Welch

JANET JACKSON DIDN'T MAKE Flyte Tyme Productions good; she just made them famous. Had Flyte Tyme's Terry Lewis and Jimmy "Jam" Harris decided not to produce her album, the only thing about their careers that would have been different is the amount of publicity they would have gained. Though Jackson's *Control* album certainly hasn't hurt the Flyte Tyme pocket-book a bit, either.

Clearly, these Minneapolis studio masters enjoy more visibility than any other producers in music, but largely because they appear in one of Jackson's videos and have recently won a Grammy for their production. And most of the people who know them from those bits of exposure may be unaware of their two-year stint with The Time, the Prince spin-off band. But that's OK. A couple of good-looking guys like Jam and Lewis obviously like to see their pictures in magazines like *Rolling Stone* and on TV, but they don't need the media attention.

As far as musical success goes, what could be better than having people love your songs no matter who sings them? They've written "I Didn't Mean to Turn You On," "Just

Be Good to Me," "Innocent," "Saturday Love," "Tender Love," "Diamonds," "Keep Your Eye on Me" and Jackson's recent hits, "Nasty," "Control," "What Have You Done for Me Lately" and "When I Think of You." They've produced records for The S.O.S. Band, Herb Alpert, Cherrelle, the Human League, Alexander O'Neal, Klymaxx, The Force M.D.s—too many to name. They like challenges, too—an upcoming project is an album with Pia Zadora.

**Top of the pops:** The result of all this activity: Flyte Tyme was the top singles publisher on both the black and the pop charts in 1986. As the NAACP pointed out in a recent scathing, if incomplete, report, blacks have a limited number of

**Rather than move to the coast, they stayed in the Minneapolis slow lane.**

career opportunities in the music world (i.e., the number of blacks in the business end of music is not nearly commensurate with the number of black artists). In light of

this fact, the success of Jam and Lewis—as both artists and businessmen—is even more impressive. Their tight control over every aspect of their work has paid off.

Plain and simple, Flyte Tyme knows how to make good, infectious music that sells, sells, sells—and gets airplay, airplay, airplay. But Lewis and Jam are much less introverted than some of their contemporaries—namely Prince and

### MUSIC

Jesse Johnson—and they make little effort to erect a facade of mystery around themselves. They appear to be musical magicians to others, but most of their success comes from a diligent work ethic and an acute awareness of how they fit into music in 1987.

Or don't fit in.

Rather than try to succeed by playing a game with rules that are necessarily slanted against blacks, Jam and Lewis have worked outside the usual confines of the music business. They run a family-style organization—choosing who they work with on the basis of personal relationships rather than sparkling resumes or fire-eyed business acumen. They keep their record-label contacts to a minimum while freely

associating with artists and writers. This approach, seemingly backward in today's amoral business climate, has worked magnificently for Flyte Tyme. In addition, it has allowed them to remain in the Minneapolis slow lane, rather than moving to neurotic L.A. or manic Manhattan.

**Coming up together:** In the late '70s, the two friends from grade school were first musically united when keyboardist Harris joined Flyte Tyme, a band led by bassist/vocalist Lewis. But Flyte Tyme never got that many gigs because only a few clubs would book them, even though they played all the popular black tunes of the day.

Harris remembers only two Twin Cities clubs that consistently booked black bands: "The Nacirema on 40th and Fourth Avenue and the Elks and that was about it," he says. "You could play at the Fox Trap every once in a while, but no, I mean, there were not a lot of clubs. At that point there were quite a few bands: I had a band called Mind and Matter. Terry had, of course, Flyte Tyme; there was a group called The Family—not the one on Paisley Park—a group called Quiet Storm and...I mean, there were a lot of black groups and about three clubs to play."

The shortcomings of the local club scene at a time when bands like Flyte Tyme were trying to make their mark explains why Minneapolis has such a high profile in the international music scene now. Prince chroniclers have commented on how smart the kid was to not play around Minneapolis, instead taking his act straight to the major labels and making his shows special events.

But Prince and the acts that followed him (The Time, Jesse Johnson, TaMara, et al.) went right to the top because nobody at the bottom—local radio, press and clubs—would give them the time of day. Twin cities accountants, managers, label representatives and assorted hangers-on (who are, almost without exception, white) gladly share in the glory that black artists have brought to the area, but they were nowhere to be found back when Jam and Lewis, among others, were struggling to get gigs.

**Funky town, gotta move on:** This ignorance of what local black musicians were doing bothers Harris in retrospect, but at the time Prince set an example that inspired other acts. The Flyte Tyme band had been playing around the Midwest for about seven years. "But what really got us motivated," says Harris, "was the fact that Prince had just up and got out of here. And we said, 'That's the way to go.' So rather than pouring all your money that you'd make from gigs into band equipment, you'd put it into going into a studio and doing a demo tape. It just changed everybody's

perspective."

Hence, Minneapolis became noted for its black musicians because of what the city *didn't*, rather than what it *did*, do for them. Some observers of the Twin Cities scene have bemoaned the lack of a musical "Great White Hope," but from Harris' perspective, white rock bands haven't become commercially huge partially because they could get gigs in town.

For the black bands, he says, "There was not a plush thing, where you could set your equipment up and stay in a club for two weeks...and make three bills, four bills a week. If you were doing that and you were comfortable with it and you got to play and the girls were coming up to you and you could get some free drinks...for the black bands, that wasn't it. But for the white bands that could do that...why would you want to leave that to do something else?"

Clearly, the white bands didn't have what could be called a "plush" situation, money-wise. Yet there were local labels such as Twin/Tone and clubs that wanted to do business with them. White bands could play anything from power thrash to synth-pop and still get by, while the black groups had to aim for mainstream and mass appeal.

**A Princely boss:** But Prince has been more than an example to Lewis and Jam; he was also their employer. Working with the *wunderkind* they learned that you have to place equal emphasis on the words "music" and "business" if you wanted to make it to the top. Prince drives his projects hard, and Harris often notes how he could make them sing things they didn't think they could sing, play things they didn't think they could play, and then make them dance, too. Prince, who eventually booted Lewis and Jam out of The Time when their own production jobs began conflicting with the band's gigs, isn't often compared to a high-school football coach, but he does inspire a definite self-confidence among those who work with him.

Jam maintains that Flyte Tyme doesn't feel the need to compete with their old boss. "When I pull out the charts and I look at the competition, I'm looking at 100 artists," he says. "Prince may have two songs, Jesse may have a song. We got Alexander; I'm worried about Luther Vandross, Freddie Jackson...I'm worried about that, I'm not worried about Prince's shit. Prince's shit, to me, is always going to be good. I'm Prince's biggest fan. He's the baddest mother-fucker around, to me—simple as that. We don't get a prize for beating Prince."

Despite the clean, razor-sharp sound of Flyte Tyme's work, their music is anything but sterile. Their studio is remarkably low-tech considering the high production values they maintain. But these two



started out as musicians, not producers, and they depend on good songwriting more than they depend on studio tricks.

Jam explains that their ability to produce music as diverse as the Human League and Herb Alpert stems from their experience playing live. During the heyday of Flyte Tyme, the band would have to play stuff like "Misty" for dinner sets, and then pull out the heavy funk later on in the night when people wanted to dance. New bands, he observes, are taking the Minneapolis-perfected "shoot for the top" approach too much to heart.

"That's one thing that I think is very unhealthy," says Harris, "the fact that now a bunch of people, especially the black bands, are just deciding, 'Well, we're not even going to do it [play live]. We're just going to do a demo tape.'"

**What have you done for me lately?** Flyte Tyme themselves have taken some knocks in Minneapolis for not working with any local bands. Harris counters that they're not looking for bands, they're looking for writers and producers who can help them do what they do. Former Time drummer Jellybean Johnson, for instance, is starting to write and produce for other artists (he did Nona Hendryx new single, "Why Should I Cry?") under Flyte Tyme's auspices.

But they've also brought relative unknowns into the fold. Harris offers an example: "A gentleman who's been instrumental in helping a lot of people out, [Twin Cities saxophonist] Morris Wilson, handed me a tape. He said, 'This is a girl named Lisa Keith. I want you to listen to her voice, see what you think, see if you can do something.' So I took the tape home, listened to it, and I'm, like, 'Yeah, she can sing good. But this song is bad. Who wrote this song?' Spencer Bernard wrote that song. 'OK, well, here, Lisa, good, you're signed. And Spencer, we're going to put this song on Janet Jackson's album.' Spencer Bernard's a rich man for writing that song. So it can happen like that.

"But Spencer came back and it wasn't like he had one hit. He came back and said, 'Oh, OK, I've got this other song, 'High Priority.' It went on Cherrelle's album. Spencer had like 20, 30 tunes over here. That's what we're looking for."

Flyte Tyme is also looking for other ways to branch out. Jam and Lewis need to vary their efforts and continue to learn new things about music in order to avoid any backlash that may come their way. Their Grammy award has certainly brought them prestige, but it's also put additional pressure on them. Or, as Harris puts it, "When they put 'Grammy award-winning producers' behind your name, you just feel a little bit more responsible not to put out no bullshit."

Michael Welch is music editor of the Minneapolis-St. Paul weekly *City Pages*.



FILM

*Gardens of Stone* has funeral oratory in place of pulpy conviction, and advertising-image nostalgia in place of romanticism.

## Coppola's latest wins Purple Heart

**Gardens of Stone**  
Directed by Francis Coppola

By Pat Aufderheide

**G**ARDENS OF STONE, FRANCIS Coppola's latest film, takes place mostly in and around Arlington National Cemetery. And the movie, sad to say, looks embalmed. It occurs in a 1968 lit to fit the colorization scheme for Sam Spade movies. In those warmly nostalgic hues, placed with elegiac music from Carmine Coppola, a solemn tale struggles to emerge.

And almost does.

It's the tale Nicholas Proffitt told in his novel *Gardens of Stone*, translated in fits of literalism by Ronald Bass into a screenplay. Jackie (D.B. Sweeney) is an Army brat gung-ho for the "front" in Vietnam. Instead he's assigned to the "show biz" unit, the Arlington honor guard.

His disgruntlement is nothing compared to the bitter disillusionment of the NCOs who virtually adopt him. James Caan and James Earl Jones play the tough Vietnam vets Hazard and Nelson, who chafe at pseudo-soldiering on parade but who also know that "there is no front" in Vietnam, and that America can't win the war being fought against an entire nation. They're as passionately idealistic about soldiering as Jackie, but, seasoned by experience, far more conflicted about how to exercise duty honorably. The flashforward to Jackie's funeral at Arlington which begins the movie foretells the futility of their struggles.

**Movie-house hothouse:** It's a hothouse issue movie, about the moral crisis Vietnam poses for the military. True to the genre, each

character stands for a social type, carefully dressed with touches of individuality. The surrounding characters have the same iconic quality: Anjelica Huston, for instance, plays anti-war *Washington Post* reporter Samantha, who falls in love with Sgt. Hazard. She has friends like a supercilious anti-war lawyer who gratuitously picks a fight with Hazard. And she befriends Jackie's girlfriend Rachel (Mary Stuart Master-son), the daughter of an officer who looks down on Jackie as the son of an NCO.

Samantha and Rachel embody two sides of the plight of womanhood-in-war. Both are far sketchier as characters than the men; for instance, we never even find out what the implausible Samantha's beat is at the *Post*. Lonette McKee completes the female cast as Nelson's girlfriend; unfortunately, she mangles the Southern accent that is her character-tic in a role as boilerplate military-female.

These generic characters illustrate predictable conflicts. The canned quality is not the fault of the actors; the leads all have powerful screen presence, and you can see them working hard. But watching the likes of Caan, Huston and Jones trying to act in this cramped environment is like watching someone raging in a padded cell.

**Small is pitiful:** The film's small scale is exemplified by repeated scenes at a dinner table in Hazard's apartment. Exposition—such as Rachel's set-piece monologue on the damage war does to returning husbands—substitutes for incident. We are closeted with the ensemble cast, breaking out occasionally to static displays of Old Guard performances. (These are conducted by the Army Old Guard;

unlike in *Apocalypse Now*, Coppola got full support from the Army, which approved the script.) The war intrudes in a few TV vignettes, and sandwiched scenes of on-the-ground war murk that look like listless outtakes from *Platoon*.

But if the filmmakers were stingy with scale, they were lavish in production design (by Dean Tavoularis), which is lush without being evocative. The set design and lighting upholster the '60s in a nostalgic mode. You'd never know, watching this film, that it was a pre-retro era, that the smell of pot and the sound of rock (even in the military) or that plastic, neon and savagely cheap colors shaped the look of the time and conditioned an "alternative" back-to-the-earth look.

These are not questions of mere decoration. Production design defines the ability to evoke the era and the way people experienced its

### Generic characters embody predictable conflicts.

conflicts. But this film evokes the idea of a past, not the past in which the fierce and anguished subject of the film took place. It evokes innocence and naive idealism, real enough in the era, but not the kind that led Daniel Ellsberg to use the phrase "controlled stupidity." In fact, it's the hazy unreality of the film's central world that takes the sting out of its comic-book portrayal of anti-war protest. The filmmakers were striving for a "classic" look; the effect is not immortalizing but anaesthetizing.

**Political sabotage:** Like *Platoon*, this is a film whose underlying

theme is the betrayal of military patriotism by political sabotage (discreetly left vague). It lacks *Platoon*'s passionate romanticism of war, though. *Platoon* was built on a reverence for ancient war clichés, and on Oliver Stone's anger at the way the unwinnable little war made them impossible. *Gardens of Stone* has funeral oratory in place of that pulpy conviction, and advertising-image nostalgia in place of romanticism.

That's not the approach we've come to expect from the flamboyant Francis Coppola, who in such films as *The Godfather*, *The Conversation* and *Apocalypse Now* undertook the challenge to describe American culture and its contradictions on film, who has experimented ambitiously if sometimes disastrously in films such as *One from the Heart* and *Rumblefish*. But Coppola's also a bankrupt businessman, recouping losses by taking on assignments from the film industry. This, like *Peggy Sue Got Married*, is a pre-packaged project to which Coppola brought an abridged packet of his skills. Perhaps the fact that his son Gian Carlo suffered a fatal accident during production also has something to do with the perfunctory tone of the film's execution.

Whatever the reason, it's clear that *Gardens of Stone* is not a "Coppola film" in any authorial sense. In fact, it seems to be nobody's film. There are lingering traces of a project someone once cared passionately about, and they come from the general concept in Proffitt's book. But cool production professionalism is applied, in *Gardens of Stone*, to the corpse of that original project.

© 1987 Pat Aufderheide



# WHY DID THEY BREAK INTO OUR INTERNATIONAL CENTER OFFICES HERE ON CAPITOL HILL?

*We believe it was because we mounted an effective investigation into illegal acts by the Reagan Administration.*

■ ALMOST A YEAR AGO, we uncovered evidence of a covert operation to aid the contras—an operation being run out of the White House by Lt. Colonel Oliver North. We found participants who were willing to talk.

We found contra officers, drug smugglers, pilots, and police officials. All were willing to tell reporters about criminal activities and the contras. They exposed bribery and corruption, illegal arms deals, hidden bank accounts, and drug flights—with U.S. government complicity.

The International Center's investigators include Jack Terrell, a former mercenary who fought with the contras. You may have seen Jack on *ABC News*, *20-20*, *CBS News*, *West 57th Street*, or *60 Minutes*. In those news reports, he told of the involvement of North in secret cash payments to the contras ... arms shipments during the Congressional ban ... and contra drug flights into Florida.

With Sen. John Kerry's staff and several extraordinary reporters, we located dozens of witnesses. As the *NY Times* commented, "The International Center has become known ... as an influential and well informed source on the administration's activities in Central America."

On the night of November 29, 1986, someone broke into our office. Our files were rifled for documents from our investigation—witness reports and biographies, Southern Air manifests, and flight logs linking the contras to drug smuggling.

At the same time, the International Center became the target of a right-wing campaign to discredit our work and our witnesses. Administration officials contacted news editors and network officials—trying to block or alter news reports. Both North and Elliot Abrams of the State Department were involved in this effort.

But their efforts failed, and the Congress and the public now know about the Iran-Contra scandals.



Former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert E. White, now President of the International Center, an independent citizens group working to restore integrity to U.S. foreign policy.

■ HOWEVER, we are still concerned. Most of our witnesses—vital to press revelations of the scandals—have *never been contacted* by any official investigator. In fact new evidence exists of FBI collaboration in a cover-up.

*Newsweek* reports FBI agents passed their reports to North. *The Wall Street Journal* states that FBI agents took part in the contra private aid network. And other journalists describe a continuing cover-up by the Miami bureau of the FBI. Attorney General Meese and FBI Director Webster now admit blocking part of the investigation.

We are deeply concerned. We believe the International Center's private investigation should continue. Many of our witnesses want to be heard—in the press, before Congressional committees, and in the courts.

If, like us, you believe there is more to come—much more—in the Iran-Contra scandals, we need your help. The International Center will continue our investigation. Such a private investigation is essential if we are to counter official efforts to cover up the facts.

We believe the authority of Congress to oversee foreign policy has been set aside by covert programs run from the White House. Ahead—as the special prosecutor and select committees find their way into this morass—major constitutional questions will be raised. A major confrontation—between the Congress and the executive branch—is coming in the Iran-Contra scandals.

An independent investigation—supported by private citizens—will help ensure that all issues are examined.

We need your help to continue this work. Your financial support in the next few weeks will play a critical role in shaping this historic investigation.

**"The Center has played a major role in investigating the extensive private network of Americans who have advised and supplied Nicaragua's contra rebels. It has been a key source of information for Congressional committees looking into the issue."**

*Christian Science Monitor*  
December 16, 1986

New York residents may receive a copy of the last financial report filed with the New York Department of State by writing to: New York Department of State, Office of Charities Registration, Albany, N.Y. 12231. Others may write to: International Center for Development Policy, 731 Eighth Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.



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**STAFF EDITOR, Dollars & Sense** magazine. Responsibilities include writing editing articles on current economic issues, and magazine manage-

## Two Positions in Social Justice Organization

Social Justice Organization seeks two national staff: Field Representative and Program Coordinator. Salaries \$22-28,000. Send resumes to Jill Nelson, Jobs with Peace Campaign, 76 Summer St., Boston, MA 02110.

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## CLASSIFIEDS

ment. Part-time position available. Salary based on \$16,100 full time. Full health benefits. Send resume and writing samples by June 15 to Dollars & Sense, One Summer St., Somerville, MA 02143.

**NICARAGUA INFORMATION CENTER,** Berkeley, seeks coordinator. Deadline May 31. Inquiries: (415) 549-1387.

**OFFICE MANAGER:** Half-time. Varied communication, organizational skills needed. Economics background, com-

puter experience desirable. Women, Third World applicants encouraged. Start July. Salary \$10,250, benefits. Cover letter, resume by June 1 to: Union for Radical Political Economics, 155 W. 23rd St., 12th Floor, NY, NY 10011.

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR:** The Philadelphia Foundation seeks an Assistant Director. Responsibilities include coordinating the grants evaluation and grants monitoring process, and evalu-

ating approximately 70 proposals per year. Candidates should have experience in community work or social services, and several years management experience. Minorities encouraged to apply. Salary \$27,000-34,000. Send resume to: Bonnie McFarlane, Ford Webb Associates, 6 Walden St., Concord, MA 01742. Deadline June 8.

**GREENPEACE,** an international environmental organization, has an opening in its Chicago office for a regional disarmament campaigner. Requirements: general knowledge of disarmament issues, minimum of 2 years experience in public interest organizations, good political judgment, proven communication skills. Salary mid to upper teens, benefits. Send resume to: Greenpeace, 921 W. Van Buren, Chicago, IL 60607.

**RUN IN NICARAGUA'S "EL REPLIEGUE"** A 30K & 10K International Road Run! Join Athletes United for Peace's delegation for the annual celebration of this historic event. Run the 30 kilometer "El Repliegue" route, Managua to Masaya, or run the 10K "fun run". Runners from Central and South America, Europe and USSR. Visit state-run coffee farm in Matagalpa, Ministry of Culture, Sports Institute, day after race at beach. All levels of runners. June 22 to 30. \$975 AUP (415) 543-6671.

## VISIT NICARAGUA

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## CALENDAR

### CHICAGO

May 23

Hear Merle Hanson, president, North American Farm Alliance, discuss the current state of the U.S. farm crisis. Featured speaker Sat., May 23, Socialist Party USA 1987 Convention Dinner, 6:30 p.m. United Church of Rogers Park, 1545 W. Morse Ave., Chicago. Dinner \$10. For information call (312) 761-0493.

June 6

IVI-IPO presents "Who Has the Last Word Now? The Roasting of Marty Oberman." The 43rd Annual Independents' Day Dinner. Saturday, June 6, at Sauer's, 311 East 23rd Street, Chicago. Cocktails 6:30 p.m., Dinner 7:30 p.m., Program at 8:15 p.m. Tickets available for \$35.00 from IVI-IPO, 220 S. State Street, Suite 726, Chicago, IL 60604, (312) 663-4203.

June 13

Vietnam Veterans Against the War will be having their 20th Anniversary Reunion June 13 in Chicago, IL. All our members and friends who have worked with us on Agent Orange, Post-Vietnam

Stress, and U.S. militarism are invited to renew friendships and hope. Call: (312) 386-1413 or 327-5756.

### BOSTON

May 31

"Can American Capitalism Be Reformed to Meet People's Needs: A Progressive Economic Program for the U.S.," a talk by David Kotz, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and *In These Times* economics columnist. 7:30 p.m. Free. Sponsored by: Democratic Socialists of America. At Workmen's Circle, 1762 Beacon St., Brookline. Childcare provided. Information: (617) 426-9026.

### PITTSBURGH

June 14-21

Marxist Literary Group presents 1987 Institute on Culture and Society at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh. Topic: "Right Hegemony Left Possibilities." Participants include: Chantal Mouffe, Ernesto Laclau, Stanley Aronowitz. For information, write to Paul Smith, Dept. of English, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, (412) 268-2850.

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## LIFE IN HELL

LIFE IN HELL

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**SCHOOL IS HELL**  
THE CARTOON THAT HAS TO STAY AFTER SCHOOL FOR MAKING CRAZY EYES OUT OF THE "O'S" IN "SCHOOL"

**LESSON 5: DOES SCHOOL LAST FOREVER?**

**1ST GRADE**  
WE'RE ALL GOING TO PUT OUR HEADS ON OUR DESKS UNTIL THE NASTY LITTLE BOY WHO DEFECATED IN THE URINAL COMES FORWARD.

**2ND GRADE**  
YOU SAY YOUR GRANDMOTHER IS FROM RUSSIA? I'M VERY SORRY TO HEAR THAT. YOU KNOW, THEY DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD IN RUSSIA, AND CHRISTMAS IS AGAINST THE LAW THERE.

**3RD GRADE**  
THE CLASS HAS BEEN DIVIDED INTO THREE READING GROUPS. THE GOLD GROUP AND THE SILVER GROUP WILL STAY HERE. THE BROWN GROUP WILL GO TO A SPECIAL ROOM IN THE BASEMENT.

**4TH GRADE**  
AND YOU'LL STAY IN THE GARBAGE CAN UNTIL YOU CAN BE A GOOD CITIZEN.

**5TH GRADE**  
DRAW A SMALL CIRCLE ON THE BLACKBOARD.  
NOW STICK YOUR NOSE ON IT WHILE THE REST OF THE CLASS GOES OUT FOR RECESS.

**6TH GRADE**  
THANK YOU FOR WRITING "I MUST REMEMBER TO BE CHEERFUL AND OBEDIENT" 500 TIMES. NOW WATCH WHILE I SLOWLY RIP IT UP BEFORE YOUR EYES.

**7TH GRADE**  
OK. SEX EDUCATION. UM, IS THERE ANYONE WHO DOESN'T KNOW?  
GOOD. NEXT: DENTAL HYGIENE.

**8TH GRADE**  
YOU LITTLE BRATS ARE LAUGHING NOW-- BUT YOU WON'T BE LAUGHING WHEN YOU GET TO HIGH SCHOOL WHERE THERE ARE GANGS, DRUG-PUSHERS, AND NEGROES.

**9TH GRADE**  
PERHAPS THIS FLUNKING GRADE WILL STEER YOU IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

**10TH GRADE**  
SO YOU THINK MARCHING IN THE HIPPI-TRIPPY PEACE DEMONSTRATION IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SCHOOL, EH? THEN I GUESS THIS "F" WON'T MATTER MUCH.

**11TH GRADE**  
I'M AFRAID THAT INSOLENT REMARK ABOUT OUR PRESIDENT WILL GO ON YOUR PERMANENT RECORD, YOUNG MAN.

**12TH GRADE**  
IF YOU THINK YOU CAN GET THROUGH LIFE DRAWING SILLY CARTOONS, YOU'VE GOT ANOTHER THINK COMING.

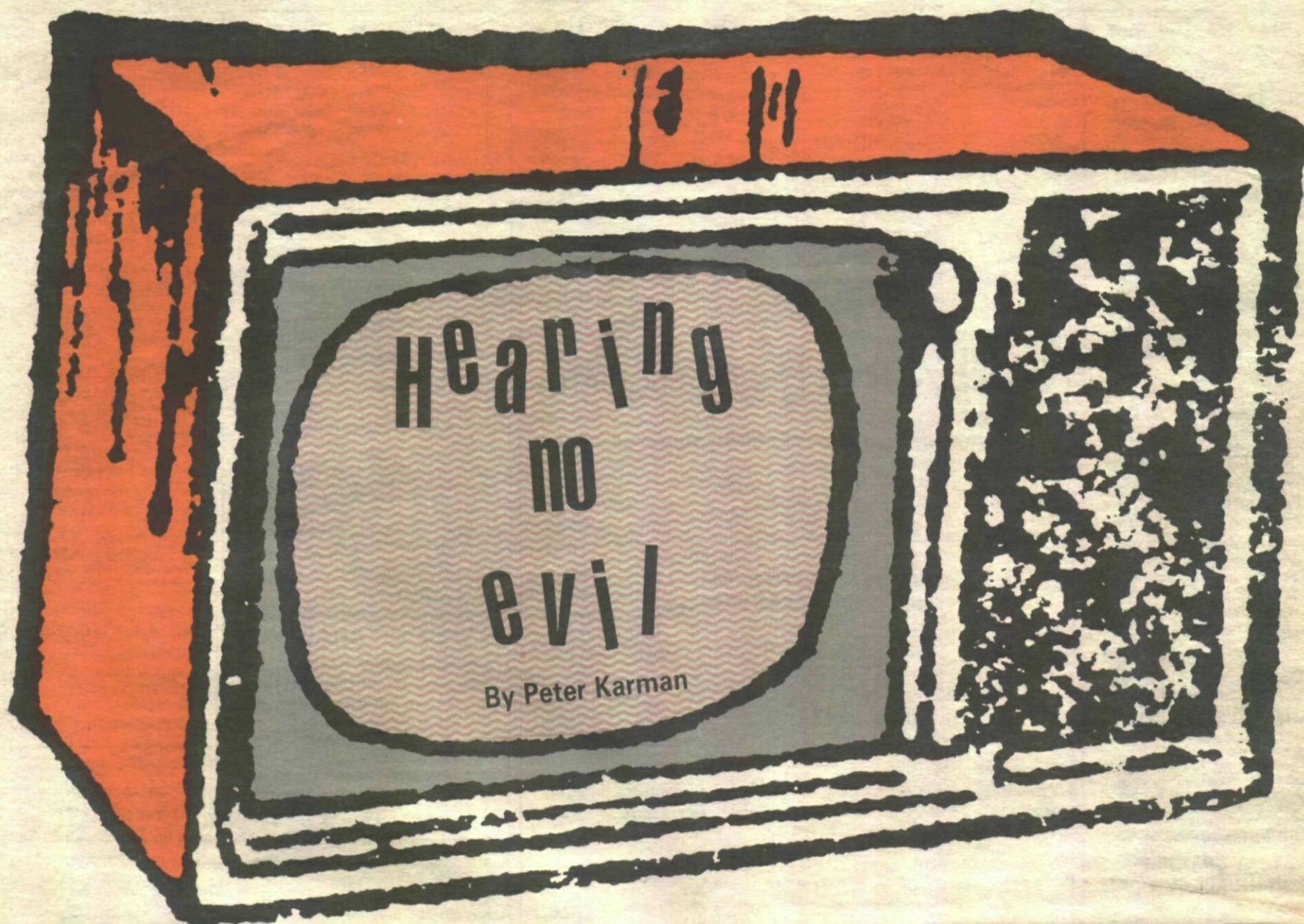
**1ST YEAR COLLEGE**  
MR. GRO-NIG, I'M GETTING BAD VIBES FROM YOU. THE REST OF THE CLASS GROKS WHAT IS GOING ON-- WHY CAN'T YOU?

**2ND YEAR**  
THE SOONER YOU ALL FACE UP TO THE FACT THAT YOU ARE LAZY, UNTALENTED LOSERS, UNFIT TO KISS THE FEET OF A GENIUS LIKE FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, THE BETTER OFF YOU'LL BE.

**3RD YEAR**  
LISTEN, I'LL GIVE YOU FULL CREDIT AS LONG AS YOU DON'T COME AROUND AND BOTHER ME ANYMORE.

**FINAL YEAR**  
YOU DO WHAT YOU DO TOLERABLY WELL, MR. GRO-NIG. NOW YOU MUST ASK YOURSELF: IS IT WORTH DOING?





## Admiral Ripcord faces the grueling interrogation of Senator Friendly

**T**ESTIMONY OF ADM. OLLIE RIPCORN, CLANDESTINE commercial cutout, before the Senate-House Select Investigating Committee on Cupidity.

*Sen. Friendly:* Is it not true, Admiral, that you were an Honor Scout, graduated at the top of your Annapolis class, heroically served your country in 13 wars, taking part in 8,027 combat missions for democracy and against communism?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Yes, sir, because I love America.

*Sen. Friendly:* Is it not also the case that you have bravely and brilliantly advised our beloved president on a variety of issues from the threat posed by Islam in the Middle East to East Room decorations?

*Adm. Ripcord:* I regard it as an honor to serve my president with whatever modest abilities with which the All-American Almighty has endowed me.

*Rep. Hostile:* Admiral, can you tell us how \$450 million in proceeds from the sale of Arlington National Cemetery came into your possession?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Sir, I am awaiting the arrival of my business partner, Amir Sheik Down, to go over the paperwork on that particular enterprise.

*Rep. Hostile:* As I understand it, these monies were to be used to overthrow the vicious pacifist regime of New Zealand. How much of these monies were actually used for that worthy and inspiring purpose?

*Adm. Ripcord:* I would have to check with Sheik Down for the specifics, sir.

*Rep. Hostile:* Can you at least give us a ballpark on that?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Sir, I believe it is somewhere in the area of \$22.75. As I recall we

picked up a lunch tab for an Auckland operative.

*Sen. Friendly:* Before my worthy colleague badgers you further, let me ask if it is true that you have a lovely wife and three fine children?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Yes, sir, when I'm not serving my country in the gloomy vaults of the Union Banque Suisse, I love nothing better than spending Saturdays with my wonderful family browsing in the garden department at the K-Mart.

*Sen. Friendly:* As a patriot and savvy strategist, can you give us an idea of our country's vital stake in New Zealand?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Yes, sir. New Zealand commands the western sea approaches to Antarctica, where the Soviets maintain an aggressive penguin study station. If we allow the New Zealand regime to continue its present policies, we face the ultimate danger.

*Sen. Friendly:* And that is, Admiral?

*Adm. Ripcord:* A pacific Pacific.

*Rep. Hostile:* Admiral, what can you tell us about the Torquemada Corp.?

*Adm. Ripcord:* I believe it's a small Salvadoran company in which Sheik Down has an interest. If I recall correctly I might own somewhere in the area of 90 percent of the stock. Nothing, really.

*Rep. Hostile:* What is the business of the Torquemada Corp.?

*Adm. Ripcord:* As I understand it, they manufacture items for sportsmen and hobbyists. Garrottes, thumbscrews, things like that.

*Sen. Friendly:* As a member of the Small Business Committee, I'd like to commend you, Admiral, for your initiative. I know the El Salvadoran police think very highly of your

company and its contribution to the local economy. I understand you hire a lot of the handicapped.

*Adm. Ripcord:* There's usually some perfectly understandable confusion on that score, Senator. We don't hire them so much as generate them.

*Rep. Hostile:* Admiral, can you tell us about your role in Rambo Land Realty?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Yes, sir. I believe it's a company that is seeking to develop a combination hazardous waste landfill and patriotic theme park on the site of the former Arlington National Cemetery. I think Mr. Sheik Down has some interest in it.

*Rep. Hostile:* Don't you also have an interest?

*Adm. Ripcord:* I would have to check my records. But as a pure guesstimate, I would reckon that I own, say, 97 percent of the stock.

*Rep. Hostile:* With all due respect, Admiral, don't you sometimes think that your involvement in the sale of Arlington National Cemetery and the diversion of funds from that deal to Torquemada and Rambo Land Realty might be construed in some quarters as inappropriate in light of the desperate need of the New Zealand freedom fighters for ballot-stuffing devices?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Those of us in the frontline of free enterprise do the very best we can, given the ingratitude shown us by the wimps and parlor pinks who would have us observe Embassy Row etiquette in the unforgiving jungle out there beyond the Beltway.

*Sen. Friendly:* Admiral, is it not true that the Arlington National Cemetery was full of dead people and old pieces of stone? And is it not also true that Congress had long con-

templated a more economically efficient use of that parcel?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Affirmative, Senator.

*Rep. Hostile:* Admiral, weren't you aware that the Bye Land Amendment specifically banned the sale of national cemeteries for the purpose of subverting South Pacific governments?

*Adm. Ripcord:* I'm a carrier pilot and investor, not a constitutional lawyer, sir.

*Sen. Friendly:* Admiral, I understand you have a mother who resembles Helen Hayes?

*Adm. Ripcord:* I believe deeply in motherhood, Senator.

*Sen. Friendly:* Could you tell us about the strategic significance of the land formerly occupied by the Arlington National Cemetery?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Sir, it commands the approaches to the upper Potomac and would be vital in any defense of the malls of Chevy Chase and Bethesda. A patriotic theme park will serve to protect it from simulated Soviet assault.

*Rep. Hostile:* What did the president know about this diversion of funds?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Sir, I'm not at liberty to divulge that information.

*Rep. Hostile:* Admiral, may I remind you that a contempt conviction in the District of Columbia is cause for automatic revocation of your realtor's license.

*Adm. Ripcord:* When I briefed the president on this enterprise, all he said was that I should make sure to invite Rhonda Fleming to the grand opening.

*Sen. Friendly:* Our thanks, Admiral. This nation stands in debt to you.

**Peter Karman** is a frequent contributor to *In These Times*. ■